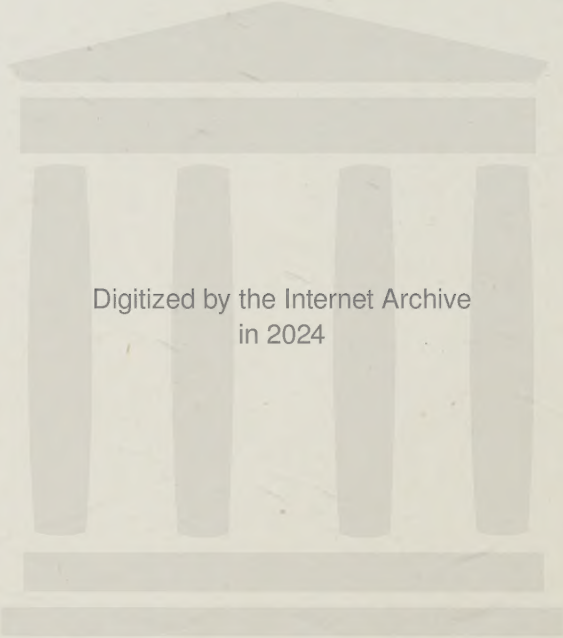


THE ORAL METHOD OF TEACHING LANGUAGES

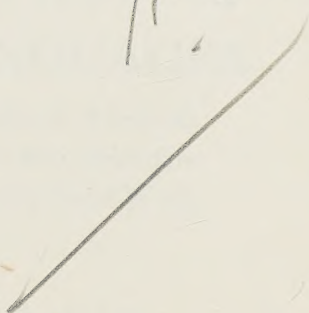
BY

HAROLD E. PALMER



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THE ORAL METHOD OF TEACHING LANGUAGES

A Monograph on Conversational Methods
together with a full description and Abundant
Examples of fifty appropriate Forms of Work

BY

HAROLD E. PALMER, D.Litt.,

AUTHOR OF

A Grammar of Spoken English,

A First Course of English Phonetics,

The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages, etc.

[*Fourth Impression*]

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"As a bright contrast to the 'constructive' method of procedure, we have the 'imitative' method, which may be so called partly because it is an imitation of the way in which a child learns his native language, partly because it depends upon that invaluable faculty, the natural imitative instinct of the pupils, to give them the proper linguistic feeling, if it only has ample opportunities for coming into play."

PROFESSOR OTTO JESPERSEN.

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DEDICATORY PREFACE.

To MRS. J. M. POWERS, *Training Institution for
Missionary Candidates, Selly Oak, Birmingham.*

DEAR MRS. POWERS,

A few months ago, when I was busy correcting the proofs of my *Principles of Language Study*, one of my colleagues asked me why that book should not be followed up by one to be entitled "How to Conduct a Conversation Course." He went on to say that the demand for language-lessons on a conversational basis was rapidly increasing, not only in England, but all over the world—and that there was apparently not a single book yet in existence which gave clear and precise indications to teachers as to how such a course should be conducted ; it was left to each individual teacher to work out his own system, good, bad or indifferent.

The idea very naturally appealed to me ; I realized how much I should have welcomed such a book in my early teaching days, and how helpful it would have been to me years ago when few teachers ventured off the beaten track of grammar, translation and reading. With this in my mind I wrote what is now contained in the last four pages of the book herewith presented to the public, and as I went on, it became more and more evident how vague and ambiguous the term " conversation " is. If the term merely denoted everyday talk

in the foreign language, little or nothing more remained to be written. If, on the other hand, the term "conversation" was to be interpreted in a more specific sense, as meaning systematic and graduated dialogue-work to be carried on between teacher and pupil, then my book, instead of being finished, was hardly even begun.

I came to the conclusion that when the term is used by teachers of speech and by designers of language-courses, it has this second and more specific meaning, and that examples of all those forms of work which are in the nature of systematized dialogues should form the bulk of the new book.

There was no lack of material; in my language-files there was a twenty years' accumulation of manuscript matter, fully half of which was suitable for purely oral work: Question-and-answer Drills of all sorts, Action Drills, Imperative Drills, Yes-and-No Drills, Sequential Groups, Conversion Exercises, Fluency Exercises, Pronunciation and Intonation Exercises, Exercises in Unconscious and Conscious Oral Assimilation, Substitution Tables, etc., of which many were worked out in several languages. My task was to make the right selection, and to devise the most practical classification—I can assure you that it was not easy to arrange this heterogeneous mass of material so as to build up a progressive system.

The classification was the chief trouble, for a classification implies some kind of nomenclature. The book would not answer its purpose if the nature and function of each form of work were not made so clear that even the amateur and inexperienced teacher could understand and use it intelligently. Until a type of work or form of

exercise has been given a name, it is difficult to talk about it or to refer to it. If names do not yet exist (and they do not), they have to be invented. Unfamiliar terms, however, tend to alarm the uninitiated, and there is a danger that the very means we adopt to make initiation easy, may produce the contrary effect. Such is the dilemma which has to be faced by all those who break new ground.

When at last I succeeded in devising a suitable (I do not say an "ideal") scheme of classification and nomenclature, I drew up what appears as the Synoptic Index at the end of the book. From that time forward all was clear; the description of the forms of work and the selecting of the examples presented no special difficulties, and I completed what is now Part II. A few pages of introductory matter, *i.e.* a brief explanation of the purpose and scope of the conversation course would, I thought, bring the work to its conclusion.

The preparation of this introductory matter led me to a piece of research-work which I had not anticipated, and I had not realized its importance until I was actually engaged in it. It consisted in reading up once again the works of the greatest authorities on linguistic pedagogy, in order to ascertain what their views on conversational work are. Although I was already well acquainted with the work of these authors, I was struck anew by the remarkable unanimity of their opinions concerning the value of oral teaching, and by the overwhelming testimony in favour of the types of work that I had been so busy cataloguing. One fact stood out clearly, *viz.* that the two terms, *Direct Method* and *Oral Method* do not necessarily denote the same thing. The Direct

Method may be based on oral teaching (in which case the course will probably be successful) or it may be based on book-work and writing, with a minimum of oral work (in which case it will probably yield poor results). In other terms, when the Direct Method produces good results, those results are really due to the fact that it has been used as an Oral Method.

This symposium on the value of the Oral Method proving so interesting and, to my mind, so valuable a documentation for the language teacher, I did not hesitate to extend the introductory part of my book very considerably. Being aware of the lack of any coherent explanation as to *why* the Oral Method should invariably prove so successful, I ventured further to extend this introductory portion by setting forth what I considered an explanation in harmony with all the facts. Even then I was not satisfied ; I felt that the idea for which we were all striving might be misunderstood unless some statements were made concerning the three purposes for which oral teaching may be used (*viz.* elementary, corrective, and advanced courses), and the different ways in which it should be applied according as the learners are school-children or adult students.

By this time I saw clearly that as I had so considerably widened the scope of this book, the original title was not a suitable one ; instead of giving a few hints as to a method of conducting a conversation course, I had written a fairly complete thesis on the Oral Method, to which was added an even more complete appendix. I therefore divided the work into two parts and gave it its present title.

* * * * *

The work you are doing at Kingsmead is work after my own heart. You are engaged in teaching our English speech to those who have need of it, and in initiating our own students into the languages of remote peoples. But you are called upon to do more than this : to you is given the opportunity of creating among those entrusted to your care that enthusiasm which will enable them to triumph over the linguistic obstacles which beset their way ; you are the source from which they will derive that inspiration which converts into a work of delight that which is too often a work of toil.

But enthusiasm alone will not suffice ; it must be associated with a rational technique and a systematic and graded programme. In these respects this book of mine may help you and your students ; I venture to dedicate it to you and to them, as a token of my sympathy with your joint endeavours.

HAROLD E. PALMER.

Part I.

THE ORAL METHOD.

I.

WHAT IS THE ORAL METHOD?

A CONSIDERABLE number, probably the majority, of those who have successfully mastered the spoken form of one or more foreign languages maintain that their success is due to the fact that, when they began their study, they plunged straight into the spoken language without doing any preliminary book-work. They advise others to do the same thing. They say: "Go among the natives, mix with them, listen to them, accustom yourself to hearing the language as spoken in everyday conversation, force yourself to understand the gist of what people say, imitate them, train yourself to retain by your auditory memory alone what you hear: words, word-groups and sentences, take every opportunity of using such units; make no systematic study of the grammar, make no written notes, perform no conscious analysis; in short, pick up the language as you did your mother tongue."

In answer to the obvious objections that we raise, they say: "In theory it can't be done, but in practice it can. I don't pretend I can describe the process in terms of psychology; I don't pretend I can explain exactly what the process is or how the mind works in such cases. All I can tell you is that the method is the right one; it always works, provided you observe the rules of the game; it worked in my case, and I have seen it work in dozens of other cases. Every child

can do it, and everybody who has learnt an unwritten language has had to do it."

We remark that we have met with people who have adopted that method, but with disastrous results ; that we know foreigners who speak atrocious pidgin English, that we know English people speaking abominable French, Hindustani, or Chinese, as the result of having picked up these languages conversationally. In answer to this we are told that those people could not have observed " the rules of the game," they were probably people who had not listened in the right way, they had not trained themselves to observe, they had not formed the proper imitation habit, they had not trained themselves to use their auditory memory ; they were probably people who imitated not what they really heard, but what they thought they heard ; who made up their own sentences by some artificial process instead of using correctly memorized sentences, they were probably people who formed " wrote mentally " what they heard and so learnt by eye instead of by ear.

We then point out that we are not in the happy position of those who can " go among the natives " and " mix with them " ; we happen to be in our own country, where the language of the natives with whom we mix is English and not the language we are setting out to learn. Our advisors will meet our objection by saying : " Well then, go to a native teacher or to somebody who speaks the language like a native ; tell him you want an oral course, a *conversation course*, and he will know what to do if he knows his business. If he does not, you will have to teach him. Tell him to talk to you in French (or whatever the language is) and to keep on talking French all the time ; tell him to talk to you about everything in the room, tell him to perform a lot of actions and to make you perform a lot of actions, and tell him to talk about what he's doing. It's quite simple ! "

When we hear such views and are given such advice, our first impression is that the speakers are too much

concerned with the purely utilitarian aims of language-study and too little with its higher aims. They seem to suggest that a superficial and inaccurate knowledge of a foreign language is of greater importance than that sort of knowledge which it should be the ambition of adult students to acquire or of school-teachers to inculcate. We are inclined to mistrust the apparent simplicity of their method and to consider it as too specious to warrant serious consideration. More especially are we unable to believe that we can cajole or bully the inexperienced teacher into giving us an oral course likely to bring about the happy results so confidently and optimistically foretold.

Nevertheless, on further consideration, we come to realize that there is much truth in the theory ; that the views expressed in that bluff and unacademic manner characteristic of the " practical linguist " correspond in their essence to the pondered opinions set forth by the pioneers of the reform movement and by those whom we rightly consider as the leading authorities on methods of language study.

The opinion of Dr. H. Sweet is set forth in his book, *The Practical Study of Languages*, page 208, as follows :

" The purely oral exercises of question and answer in the foreign language should precede any attempts at written reproduction of what has been learnt, partly on the general ground that the fixed associations of the ear should precede the secondary and perhaps variable associations of the written form of the language, partly because of the facility and quickness with which they can be worked. They have the further advantage of training the pupils both to understand what is said, and reproduce it with accuracy and ease. They are, in fact, the best possible substitute for a phonetic method, although they will be ten times more efficient if preceded by systematic training in phonetics. They are also in the highest degree stimulating to the pupils, and develop quickness, presence of mind, and the power of observation."

Paul Passy, in his *Méthode Directe*, says :

" L'imitation, c'est là, en effet, le secret ouvert de la bonne acquisition d'une langue. C'est par l'imitation -l'imitation naturelle, spontanée, irréfléchie—que le petit enfant apprend sa langue maternelle sans fatigue, sans effort pénible, sans travail

intellectuel exagéré. Il peut même en apprendre plusieurs simultanément. . . . C'est aussi l'imitation, non la construction, qui doit être la base d'une méthode rationnelle pour l'acquisition d'une langue étrangère, quand il s'agit, non plus d'un bébé qui ne sait pas encore parler, mais d'un enfant qui possède déjà une langue et doit en apprendre une autre. Tous ceux qui veulent réformer l'enseignement sont d'accord là-dessus; et tous pensent que l'imitation dont il s'agit doit ressembler, dans ses grands traits, à l'imitation spontanée du bébé. C'est là en effet, notre modèle tout indiqué: le simple fait que le bébé apprend sa langue et peut en apprendre plusieurs, nous montre qu'il possède une bonne méthode, et que nous ferons bien de le prendre pour guide."

In Goethe's *Aus meinem Leben* (as quoted by Jespersen) we read:

"Thus I had learned Latin, just like German, French, English, only through practice, without rule and without system; . . . everything seemed to come naturally to me. I retained the words, their formations and transformations in my ear and in my mind, and I employed the language with ease for writing and talking."

John Storm says:

"The worst and most unfruitful torment in the school instruction of the present time is the excessive use of exercises in foreign languages."¹

Jespersen, commenting on this, says:

"As a bright contrast to the 'constructive' method of procedure, we have the 'imitative' method, which may be so called partly because it is an imitation of the way in which a child learns his native language, partly because it depends upon that invaluable faculty, the natural imitative instinct of the pupils, to give them the proper linguistic feeling, if it only has ample opportunities for coming into play."²

In the course of an interesting and scholarly article entitled "The Teaching of English to Foreigners," Mr. Arthur Powell, one of the veterans of the Modern Language Association, wrote³: "I think . . . it is an immense gain if no book comes between the teacher and the class, and if the teaching is oral or nearly so,"

¹ *Franske taleøvelser*, Preface.

² *How to Teach a Foreign Language*, p. 124.

³ *The Modern Language Quarterly*, October, 1904.

and in the same article quotes "a recent French Minister of Instruction," who had "said that the knowledge of a language was based upon conversation in that language."

Coming to the more recent literature on the subject we read in *The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages in School and University*¹:

"It is justly emphasised to-day that we cannot 'read' even prose correctly, and much less verse, if we are substituting a false sound-picture for that in which the author conceived and fashioned his work. Whether the work is 'read' aloud or not is in this respect immaterial. This conception is one of the supremely important results which has flowed from the insistence in recent years on the truism that language consists of sounds and not of symbols, that the prose work or the poem does not *live* on the printed page, but has to be, consciously or unconsciously, evoked into existence through our re-translation of the symbols into the sounds for which they stand. (Page 8.)

"One of the special dangers to which we, as an insular people, are exposed, is an under-estimation of the difficulty of acquiring *real* conversational command of a foreign language. (Page 9.)

"Self-expression requires a command of the names of familiar persons and objects (nouns) with their qualities (adjectives) and their actions (verbs) with modifications (adverbs). This command is most readily acquired and most firmly retained by connecting the nouns with the persons and objects with which the pupils are in contact, and the verbs with the actions of the pupils and their associates. . . . When the pupil can handle or point to an object as well as name it, open the door as well as say he is opening it, he acquires a new idea of the reality of language. . . . It is the systematic application of what the accomplished linguist does in learning a foreign language, *i.e.* he learns the language by using it." (Pages 64, 65.)

"Accuracy and readiness of speech must be secured within the limits of the subject-matter. Both vocabulary and grammar must be assimilated in association with living subject-matter." (Page 68.)

After having considered the views of such scholars and educationalists as those we have quoted (and we could add to such quotations almost indefinitely) we turn again to the adult language-learner and the private language-teacher, in order to see to what extent their experience tallies with the theory propounded in the preceding pages. We discover that the results obtained

¹ By H. G. Atkins and H. L. Hutton. Edwin Arnold, 1920.

by oral and conversational work are almost invariably superior, rarely inferior, to those obtained by the more traditional methods of book-work and pen-work. There are, of course, exceptions, but in most of these exceptional cases we find either that the oral course was given by an inexperienced teacher, or that the student was unwilling or unable to adapt his mental processes to this method.

Missionaries and others, whose work brings them into contact with the remoter languages, tell us the same story. Not by reading and writing, but by dint of oral work, did they succeed in their efforts towards language-mastery. The same effects are to be noted in the experience of children under the care of a foreign nurse or governess. When they subsequently join the French or German class at school they find themselves as much in advance of their classmates as a French or German child would be. "Thousands of Belgian refugee children returned to their country in possession of an English speech (acquired orally) hardly to be distinguished from the speech of English children of their age."¹

There appears, then, to be an overwhelming body of evidence in favour of a method of language-study which excludes all except what may be termed "oral," "conversational," "natural" or "intuitive" work. We ask if this method is identical with the modern "Reform" or "Direct" method as used in schools at the present day. Is this the method of which we have heard so much in recent years; the system endorsed by the Modern Language Association and recognised formally by the Government Committee on Modern Languages? Are school children plunged straight into the spoken language without having to do any preliminary book-work, and encouraged to assimilate language-material by ear? The answers are negative. "Direct Method" and "Oral Method" are not necessarily synonymous terms. Neither the Modern Language Association nor the Government Committee advocates the exclusion of

¹ My *The Principles of Language Study*, page 41.

the written form from the preliminary phase of the programme of study. We are bound to recognise the existence of two systems or schools of reform: the one advocated and carried into effect by the Educational authorities, and the other urged by adherents of the purely oral method.

This divergence is very largely due to the difference between the aims of the two schools. Those who have been responsible for the initiation and development of the "Reform" or "Direct" Method, have been largely inspired by what Jespersen calls "the higher purpose in the teaching of language . . . the access to the best thoughts and institutions of a foreign nation, its literature, culture—in short, the spirit of the nation in the widest sense of the word." The Educational and Academic and Scholastic authorities, and with them the movement fathered by the Modern Language Association of England and similar bodies abroad, are not particularly concerned with utilitarian purposes. They tend to consider Modern Languages as an adjunct to Modern Studies; and although not unmindful of the practical ends of Modern Studies, they insist strongly on the idealistic purposes of a linguistic programme.

"It will not suffice to base the claims of Modern Studies solely on the practical needs of individuals or even of the nation. We need an ideal such as inspires the highest Classical Studies. The best work will never be done with an eye to material profit. We must frame our ideal so that it can be consistently pursued through the whole course of school and University life, and even beyond. The first object in schools must be to lay the foundations of scholarship and skilled facility of expression and comprehension. . . . Early we should also aspire to make some of the boys and girls understand that foreign languages are not learnt as an end in themselves, but as a means to the comprehension of foreign peoples, whose history is full of fascinating adventure, who have said and felt and seen and made things worthy of our comprehension, who are now alive and engaged in like travail with ourselves, who see things differently from ourselves and therefore can the better help us to understand what is the whole of truth. Before the boys and girls leave school, by history and literature and other helps to instruction they should be convinced that the study of foreign peoples is an attractive pursuit, and that it cannot be carried far without an intimate

knowledge of their languages. Then we shall have as entrants to our Universities men and women who are fit to range, without direct assistance, the whole learning and literature of the languages they elect to follow, and require from their professors only the higher aid. Some of these at their graduation should be finished scholars, ready to become masters and experts in all that appertains to the countries and the peoples that they choose for study. All this can be done for Greece and Rome ; why not for France and Germany, for Italy and Spain. . . . The study and practice of the use of language as a fine art is an admirable school of thought and taste. The study of literature, critical, æsthetic, or scientific, should not fail to develop imaginative sympathy, and it is one of the principal avenues to the knowledge of a foreign people. . . . Those studies should be in the widest sense historical, and embrace a comprehensive view of all the larger manifestations of the past and present life of the peoples selected for study. . . . So regarded, and only when so regarded, Modern Studies may become a means of complete culture and enlightenment. . . . To those highest ends but few can approach, but the higher they are set the greater benefit to all."¹

On reading such passages as these we come to realize to what extent the scholar and the practical linguist may be at cross-purposes, while discussing a question on which fundamentally, they are in agreement.

The practical linguist, whose aims are largely utilitarian, is little interested in the ideals of the scholars, but intensely interested in the acquisition of a working knowledge of a language. The education authorities, whose aims are largely humanistic, are not unmindful of the pressing needs of the majority of language-learners, but are more especially solicitous for the advancement of learning in its wider and higher sense. But there need be, nay there should be, no antagonism between the two sets of views and aims, for there is much ground which is common to the two. The linguist is aiming at language mastery because a language is useful for all sorts of immediate and ultimate purposes ; the educationalist is aiming at language mastery because a language is an instrument of culture. The first stage of their respective programmes is correctly designated by

¹ *Report of the Government Committee on Modern Languages*, §§ 56, 57.

the common but ambiguous terms *Proficiency in or Mastery of, Foreign Languages*.

Those whose opinions are set forth in the opening paragraphs of this introduction are speaking of the practical mastery of the spoken form of a given foreign language considered as a means of communication; they are thinking of the needs of those whose calling brings them into contact with people whose language is not the same as theirs; they are thinking of those millions of earth-dwellers who are engaged, on grounds of necessity or expediency, in acquiring the speech of foreign peoples. "The vast majority of language-learners," they say, "are concerned primarily and mainly with language as a vehicle for everyday intercourse."

Should an over-zealous educational idealist be ill-advised enough to retort with a sneering reference to "hotel-French" and to "waiter-linguists," he may receive a merited rebuke:

"The ideal of the linguist, as contrasted with that of the scholar, is to be able to use the foreign language in such a way that the natives consider him not as a foreigner but as one of themselves. If he can speak their language fluently and idiomatically, he will be able to converse with them and exchange amenities in a manner likely to awaken their sympathy and confidence. Without discoursing on the philosophy, the literature, the history or the culture of the people of whom he is the guest, the linguist is able to arrive at a cordial intimacy unknown to those who may surpass him in erudition. The civil or military administrator who can talk on terms of linguistic equality with those who are subject to his rule is one who can contribute to the world's ideals. The missionary does not learn Pekingese or Tamil in order to have access to the best thoughts contained in the literature of North China or South India; he wants to talk to the people of these countries in their own languages in order that they may have access to the best thoughts and institutions of Western civilisation."

Kipling's delightful story of *Tods' Amendment* relates how the little boy, thanks to his orally acquired command of colloquial Hindustani, had so developed "imaginative sympathy" with "the thoughts, institutions and spirit of the foreign people" that he was the means of bringing about an important and salutary modification of Indian administrative law.

If we have discussed at some length the respective ideals of the scholar and the linguist, it is because a proper understanding of the differences between them is essential to those who are engaged in the study or teaching of languages. Some pages back we asked ourselves the question: Is the Oral or Conversational Method identical with that "Direct"¹ or "Reform" method which is used in schools at the present day? We answered that on the whole the two systems were by no means identical, but that they differed both in their aims and in their procedure. In order better to understand the differences of procedure it is necessary to understand the difference in their aims; hence this somewhat long digression.

The two systems certainly have this in common, that they are modern reactions against antiquated methods. The protagonists of the one method are in agreement with the adherents of the other in excluding (for a considerable period) the more or less archaic language of literature, deductive grammar and (as far as possible) the use of the mother-tongue. But they differ in many other respects. The Direct Method in its extreme form excludes the use of traditional orthography for the first stage; the Oral Method, in its extreme form excludes any form of writing whatever. The Direct Method specifies that the reading matter shall consist of connected texts, dialogues, descriptions or narratives, all as easy, natural and interesting as possible. The Oral Method in its extreme form specifies that there shall be no reading matter at all. The Direct Method

¹ The term "Direct" is an unsuitable one, and appears to be falling into disfavour.

apparently provides a programme of matter to be assimilated consciously ; the Oral Method provides, in addition, forms of work in which the pupil's powers of unconscious assimilation are trained and developed. The Direct Method (according to many of its interpreters) develops the pupil's powers of analysis and synthesis ; the Oral Method tends to discourage such powers and strives rather to bring into play the pupil's capacities for memorizing and habit-forming. The Direct Method allows the pupil to supplement ear-work by eye-work ; the Oral Method insists on unaided ear-work.

Now whether the " Direct " Method is held to be a complete method or not, the Oral or Conversational method cannot be so considered. Whatever its most ardent protagonists may claim for it, those who have made a comprehensive study of the science of linguistic pedagogy have concluded that the Oral method is a necessary feature or phase of the " Complete " method. The Oral Method is of the teleological order ; it is a means to an end ; it is an essential preliminary step towards an ultimate complete mastery of a language. The Oral Method will re-awaken and re-educate those spontaneous capacities for language study which are inherent in the human race ; those innate powers manifested in the earliest years of childhood, but which are generally allowed by disuse to recede into a latent state.¹

But it is maintained that the Oral Method should rarely stand alone ; it should be used in proper co-ordination with a more complete programme of linguistic study, a programme which will also contain a due proportion of written work.

It is outside the scope of this book to specify the ideal proportions between written and oral work ; the subject has been amply dealt with elsewhere, but the author's present intention is to set forth a classified list of all those forms of work which are likely to be of service to those who use the Conversation Method.

¹ See my *The Principles of Language Study*.

We have used the terms "Oral" and "Conversation" as if they were synonymous terms; in reality, however, they are not synonymous. The term "Oral" is used to denote all that is done by the medium of the spoken word, and much may be performed in the way of Oral work, that cannot be covered by the term "conversation" or "conversational."

But what does the term "conversation" really mean when used as a qualificative of the terms "method," "course," or "lesson"? Has the term its ordinary face value? Does it mean neither more nor less than a series of talks between the teacher and his pupil? If so, how can a person participate in a conversation carried on entirely in a language of which he is perfectly ignorant? If the term "conversation" means what it seems to mean, then a conversation course can only be given to students who have already mastered the language. And yet we have heard of conversational methods by means of which raw beginners are initiated into the elements of the language without the intervention of so much as a single word of their native tongue. When we have given a little thought to the matter we shall conclude (and rightly) that when used in connection with language study the term has a specific meaning, that it is used in a technical sense, that it means *learning to use a foreign language without reading, without writing, without theory, and without translation, by dint of listening to the teacher speaking and by responding to what he says*. Although this is a sufficiently close definition for our purpose it would perhaps be truer to add a few qualifying words and to say *almost entirely without reading, with little or no writing, without studying a systematized and formal theory of the language-structure, and without any unnecessary recourse to the mother-tongue as a vehicle for instruction*.

It is necessary for us to realise that this is the true meaning of the term *conversation* when used in connection with language-study, for if we give the term its general and popular meaning, serious confusion is likely

to arise and we may become guilty of bad blunders. If a "conversation lesson" consists in saying *how do you do* and in discussing the weather with a foreigner who is already able to speak our language, well, it is no lesson at all, but merely ordinary conversation. It is perhaps on account of such misinterpretation of the term that we hear the would-be language teacher, professeur or Sprachlehrer declare his intention to give conversation lessons "because it's so easy, and requires no special training"! Take a person of average education; set before him one or more foreign students whose knowledge of English is *nil*; tell him to carry on a conversation lesson, and ask him afterwards whether it was "so easy." Or set before him one or more foreign students whose only knowledge of English consists in readiness to use some atrocious pidgin; tell him to initiate and carry on a conversation lesson, and ask him afterwards whether that sort of work "requires no special training."

The fact is that, far from being easy, the conversation course is extremely difficult; only after having gained much experience can anyone call himself qualified to conduct that sort of work. The giving of the old-fashioned sort of course (consisting of a little reading, a little dictation, a little translating and a little composition) is child's play compared with the giving of a conversation lesson. In the old-fashioned course the teacher simply follows the book. He says "Lesson 20 . . . read please . . . now translate that . . . thank you; for next time prepare Lesson 21." The conversation lesson requires alertness and resourcefulness on the part of the teacher; he (and not the book) is conducting the lesson; into the sixty minute lesson he puts sixty minutes' work. It must be added, however, that if the teacher is one who has studied the art, who has applied himself to mastering its technique, who has accumulated volumes of notes and who possesses a natural gift for teaching, no form of language-work is more delightful.

II.

IN WHAT THE ADVANTAGE OF THE ORAL METHOD CONSISTS.

WE have noted that those who so categorically and so persistently affirm the superiority of the Oral or Conversational method are generally unable to adduce any but a *posteriori* evidence in support of their thesis. They say that experience has proved that those who have become proficient in using foreign languages in the manner of natives have invariably attained such proficiency as the result of having "plunged straight into the spoken language without doing any preliminary book-work," but they cannot tell us why this procedure is successful nor justify it on psychological grounds.

It will perhaps not be out of place here to endeavour to ascertain why oral work when performed in the right way is always so peculiarly effective, especially in the initial stages of language-study.

Those who tend to belittle oral work and to under-rate its value, base their reasoning on the assumption that reading or writing leads to a mastery of language in the true and higher sense, whereas oral work can only lead to a superficial proficiency in that trivial form of language called "spoken" or "colloquial."¹

¹ . . . die Frage erhebt sich, ob das Studium der Lautsprache oder das der Schriftsprache wertvoller ist, eine Frage, die ohne Zweifel zu gunsten der Schriftsprache beantwortet werden muss. . . . Die Lautsprache ist. . . . vor allem die Verkehrssprache des täglichen Lebens. Die Schriftsprache ist . . . ein Erzeugnis höherer Bildung und . . . ist für die Schule viel wichtiger, da sie . . . nach ihrem Inhalt eine höhere Stufe der Entwicklung des menschlichen Geistes darstellt. Niemand wird behaupten können, dass das Studium der Umgangssprache den Geist mehr bildet als die Beschäftigung mit den Werken der Dichter und Denker. . . . Wir müssen im Sprachunterricht vor allem eingedenk sein, dass die Schriftsprache das Erzeugnis und der wichtigste Träger einer höheren Kultur ist.—*Sprachpsychologie und Sprachunterricht*, F. Baumann, pp. 139 and 142.

"The spoken language," they say, "is comparatively valueless in its contents as compared with the written language, which is the medium of culture. Why then pay more than a passing attention to oral and conversational work?"

The argument is misleading; it is an example of what logicians call the "fallacy of the *irrelevant conclusion*." We must become proficient in the oral use of language not merely in order that we may be able to exchange colloquial banalities with foreigners but *because proficiency in using oral language is the most powerful help towards our assimilating the material of both the spoken and the written languages.*

Let us make quite sure that we have grasped this idea, for with it stands or falls the whole argument in favour of the oral method.

*"Learning to speak a language is always by far the shortest road to learning to read it and to write it. . . . By using the language as speech the pupil will cover something like twenty times as much ground in a given time as he would by doing written exercises. . . . The acquiring of a language is the acquiring of an art, the art of expressing oneself in that language; this art, like every other art, must be acquired by practice—that is, by using the language; the most satisfactory manner of using the language from the practical point of view of economy of time and effort is as speech, and it is also, theoretically, the most natural; it follows, therefore, that a language should be learnt by speaking it. . . . Living languages should be taught as living speech; that is, they should be taught orally."*¹

Henry Sweet, in *The Practical Study of Languages*, says:

"Conversation in a foreign language may be regarded from two very different points of view: (1) as an end in itself, and (2) as a means of learning the language or testing the pupil's knowledge of it."

In *The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages* (previously quoted) the authors say:

"It must . . . be strongly emphasised that correctness in the use, not only of the written, but also of the *spoken* word has a value quite apart from the utilitarian employment of the

¹ E. C. Kittson, *Theory and Practice of Language Teaching*, pp. 41, 42, 43.

language, and one which affects *all* students and not merely those who are likely to make a 'practical' use of them. The educational value of correctness in the use of the written word has been long and generally recognised, and we need not emphasise it here. What has not been so generally recognised and hardly recognised at all until quite recent times, is the purely educational as opposed to the utilitarian importance of correctness in the use of the spoken word. Correctness of 'pronunciation' in this sense is concerned not only with the separate speech-sounds, but also with their combination in the word and the living phrase, with the whole rhythm and melody of speech."

B Eggert, in the course of his articles in the *Zeitschrift für französischen und englischen Unterricht* (1902 and 1904), entitled "Der psychologische Zusammenhang in der Didaktik des neusprachlichen Reformunterrichts" adduces three arguments in favour of oral assimilation.

1. *It is able to bring about a practical mastery of speech.* "Der ausschliessliche Betrieb fremdsprachlicher Lektüre führt zum Verstandnis des Schriftbildes beim Lesen, fast nie aber zur Fähigkeit des geläufigen Hörens oder Sprechens."

2. *It is in accordance with the psychological analysis of speech representation.* "Auf Grund der natürlichen Beziehungen der Sprachvorstellenselemente kann die Schriftbildvorstellung viel leichter von der Klangbildvorstellung aus eingeübt werden, als umgekehrt diese von jener."

3. *It takes into consideration of the pupil's natural disposition or gift.* "Die akustische Veranlagung kennzeichnet sich als Grundlage sprachlicher Begabung. Die visuelle Sprachenlernung ist infolgedessen auch für die Aneignung des Schriftbildes nur insoweit berechtigt, als die ausgeprägte individuelle Veranlagung des Schülers es erfordert."

It is frequently supposed that we understand what we read or hear by noting the meaning of each successive word. As a matter of fact this is not the case. It has been proved experimentally that the eye of the reader advances along the lines by a series of jumps; occasionally the jumps are short ones extending over a single

word, but generally they are jumps over several words or whole sentences. If by some mechanical device, the words of the sentences we read were made to appear in such a way that only one were visible at a time (something in the manner of the illuminated advertisements that enliven the streets of large towns) we should experience a considerable difficulty in making out their sense. Similarly — pause — if — pause — somebody — pause — were — pause — to — pause — speak — pause — to — pause — us — pause — word — pause — by — pause — word — pause — in — pause — the — pause — manner — pause — indicated — pause — in — pause — this — pause — passage — pause — far — pause — from — pause — aiding — pause — us — pause — in — pause — understanding — pause — him — pause — it — pause — would — pause — have — pause — the — pause — contrary — pause — effect. The mind does not generally perceive the individual words but proceeds by a series of jumps, just as the eye does when reading.

Now, until we have become proficient in speaking, understanding, writing, or reading the foreign language in a series of "jumps" our progress is exceedingly slow, but once we have acquired this proficiency our capacity for assimilating and using the foreign speech material is tripled or quadrupled.

In recalling our linguistic experiences many of us remember a time at which we seemed suddenly to gain the power of understanding what we heard or read in a language which had previously been unintelligible to us; and (if our memories do not belie us) shortly after that wondrous moment we found we were able to express ourselves spontaneously, with comparative ease and correctness; from that moment onwards, our study was as child's play.

In some cases it may be found that years passed before this desirable stage was reached; in other cases we discover that a few weeks sufficed. We now begin to understand the reason for the success or failure which attended our efforts to acquire this or that language,

why we mastered German so easily but failed in French (or *vice versa*).

Some may assume that every language-learner must necessarily pass through the two phases ; first that in which he recognizes or produces speech-material word by word and then that in which he proceeds from group to group. As a matter of fact this is what frequently does happen but, let us add, quite unnecessarily. There is no reason whatever why the student should not omit the first phase altogether. If anybody objects that in recommending such a short cut we cause students to travel by the longer and more tedious road (since the mastery of words is supposed to be more easy to gain than the mastery of groups), we reply that it is one of these cases in which the apparently longest road is the shortest.

Why, then, do not more language learners adopt the right procedure ? Why do so many linger for months or years in the word-by-word stage ? The reasons are not far to seek. In the first place the student is generally ignorant of the facts of the case ; as he has no conception of what the right procedure is, he takes no steps to adopt it. In the second place, there is a real obstacle to his progress in the right direction : *the fatal attraction of the false facility offered by the written word*. As long as he can proceed word by word along the written line, identifying each word as it occurs, he will make no efforts to advance "group by group." When he finds he can write his composition (or translation exercise) in the foreign language by dint of thinking of one word at a time, he sees no reason why he should modify his procedure. The teacher is usually quite satisfied with him, and he is usually quite satisfied with himself and is content to continue in the same way. He is aware that he is unable to understand what is said to him except when the speaker — pause — brings — pause — out — pause — his — pause — words — pause — one — pause — by — pause — one — pause — and — pro — pause — noun — pause — ces — pause — each — pause — one — pause — ve — pause — ry — pause — dis —

pause — tinct- — pause — ly. But he trusts that in course of time and by practice he will acquire such proficiency in identifying isolated words that he will come to understand the ordinary fluent speech of the native.

Similarly he is aware that the only way in which he can express himself orally is by the cumbrous process of thinking out each word in its written form and of converting that into its articulated form by reading it mentally. But here again he is satisfied that he will eventually come to carry on this process so rapidly that he may even be mistaken for a native.

And so he continues patiently for months (or years) painfully acquiring (and often forgetting) his isolated units one by one when he ought to be assimilating the speech material wholesale, absorbing it, so to speak, through every pore.

Now when we listen to a language being spoken (be it the conversational or the literary variety) the words succeed each other without a break ; we listen to word-groups, and fail to perceive the individual words of which they are composed. We hear the exact pronunciation and intonation of the strings of syllables ; we perceive things that would be imperceptible were we to focus our attention on the smaller units ; we hear the language as it really is.

Hence, the students who are given no opportunity of seeing the written form, but who are given full and repeated opportunities for listening to the spoken form of the language are prevented *ipso facto* from acquiring the "isolating habit," they do not pass through the isolating phase at all, but proceed from the outset by developing their capacities for immediate and spontaneous assimilation.¹ The more they are compelled to receive and to use language-material by the oral medium the more rapidly will they reach the stage where their rate of progress begins to be accelerated. This initial period devoted exclusively to oral work is not necessarily of long duration ; when the student is

¹ See my *The Principles of Language Study*, Chapter VII.

able to reproduce fluently and accurately a fairly long string of syllables at first hearing, he may be considered as immune from the vicious "isolating" habit and may proceed to make use of the written side by side with the oral medium.¹

The study of a language is in its essence a series of acts of memorizing; whether we are concerned with isolated words, with word-groups, with meanings or with the phenomena of grammar, the fact remains that successful memorizing is the basis of all progress.²

To assimilate language-material and to *memorize* language-material are synonymous expressions; the sum of the words (or word-groups) which we have memorized is equal to the sum of those we are able to use. Some students, as we have noted, tend to confine their efforts of memory to isolated words (and their rate of progress is slow); others extend the process to word-groups (and their rate of progress is rapid). Some memorize by dint of conscious and intensive effort, others memorize spontaneously and unwittingly by enlisting in their service the speech-acquiring capacities with which we are endowed by nature. In all cases, however, memorizing is the factor which determines success.

The memorizing of speech-material consists of two

¹ "It will soon be seen that skill in speaking increases like wealth; if you have only reached a certain point, the rest comes of its own accord; the accumulated capital multiplies surprisingly fast and willingly."—Jespersen, *How to Teach a Foreign Language*.

² "Those who introduced the 'Direct' or 'Reformed' Method into the teaching of modern languages . . . held strongly that grammatical analysis should be deferred as being merely a cumbrous means of reaching results that can be far more speedily attained by habits of speech. Thus it is easy to learn to say: *Je ne le lui ai pas donné*; but to learn all the rules that govern the order of these words is a long and tedious business."—*Report of Government Committee on Modern Languages*, §195.

"Probably the most useful kind of personal effort and that which is most easily enforced is the learning by heart of many typical phrases. The provision of such a series of moulds into which his thoughts may be cast is of immense value for the beginner, whatever his age."—*Ibid.*, §198.

processes: *catenizing* and *semanticizing*.¹ *Catenizing* means: learning to recognize or to produce a chain of sounds or syllables as an integral whole, irrespective of all considerations of meaning. *Semanticizing* means: forming a perfect association between a word (or word-group) and that for which it stands. When we are able to recognize or reproduce *with a single effort* such a sentence as "J'espère que je ne vous ai pas fait trop attendre,"² we are said to have *catenized* it. When this sentence considered as a whole is immediately associated in our minds with its meaning (expressed in English as "I hope I haven't kept you waiting too long"), we are said to have *semanticized* it. The perfect combination of these two processes results in a perfectly memorized unit.

Now it is impossible to memorize speech-material without articulating it in some form or other. It is generally supposed that articulation occurs only when we actually speak, that the sole function of articulation is to make ourselves heard in speech. But in reality we articulate not only what we say aloud, but also what we hear, what we read and what we think. When we speak, we articulate aloud, the muscles of our organs of speech actually move and produce a succession of actual sounds. When we listen with understanding to what someone is saying, when we read with understanding anything written, and when we are "thinking to ourselves" we go through a process called "inner-articulating"; we articulate mentally, our speech-muscles, without necessarily moving, are stimulated by the nerves communicating with the speech-centre of our brain.³

¹ See my *The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages*, Sections 17 and 18.

² ʒes-pe:r-kəʒ-nə-vu-ze-pɑ-fe-trə-pɑ-tādr.

³ Victor Egger, *La parole intérieure*: "Souvent ce que nous appelons *entendre* comprend un commencement d'articulation silencieuse, des mouvements faibles, ébauchés, dans l'appareil vocal." (Ribot.) See also my *The Principles of Language Study*, p. 93. (Harrap.)

Articulation in some form or other is the indispensable and invariable concomitant of memorizing speech-material ; our visual powers alone can neither "catenize" nor "semanticize" Words and word-groups are not perceived by the normal language user so long as they have not produced some sort of reaction in his vocal apparatus.¹ Let the reader (assuming him to be unacquainted with Japanese) look at and consider the following sentence :

Tora wa kedamono des

(meaning "The tiger is an animal"). Let him endeavour to memorize it (both "catenically" and "semantically") without any form of articulation, audible or mental.² He will certainly fail, he cannot help "saying it to himself."

Let the reader also endeavour to correct the mistakes in the following without articulating (audibly or mentally) the sentences or word-groups :

I go always there. A so important undertaking. He didn't take all of them, didn't he ? Je ne le vous ai pas donné. Voulez-vous suivez moi ? J'ai pris la crayon.

A foreign student shows us the two sentences : *He'd taken them, He'd take them*, and asks us in which case he may add *wouldn't he ?* and *hadn't he ?* respectively. Can we answer his enquiry without articulating and "thinking" the sentences ? He then asks us which of the two forms is more normal or more correct : *I took all of them*, or *I took them all*. Whatever our answer may be we first test the two forms by articulating them. In short, we are unable to judge of the correctness or incorrectness of a given construction even in our own language, until we have submitted it to the articulation test.

¹ We say advisedly "the normal language-user" for the case of deaf-mutes is recognized as being a special one.

² Although it is immaterial for our present purpose to know what the pronunciation is we may mention that the spelling of this sentence is practically phonetic.

To *learn* a word (or word-group) means the same thing as to *memorize* it ; in order to *memorize* it we must *articulate* it (either audibly or mentally). Now there are two methods of memorizing speech-material :

(1) By listening to someone who articulates it aloud (on one or several occasions) and by articulating it ourselves (audibly or mentally) in unison with him, immediately after him or a long time after we have heard him articulate it.

(2) By looking at the written form (on one or several occasions) and by articulating it ourselves (audibly or mentally) while we are looking at it, immediately after having looked at it or a long time after we have seen it.

In the first case we are working with a model ; we are using our powers of *observation* and *imitation*. In the second case we are working without a model ; we are relying wholly on our power of *imagination* ; we are imagining what the word or words *would sound like if someone were to say them*. It is needless for us to insist on the relative simplicity or facility of the first method as compared with the second. It is also needless for us to insist on the relative degree of accuracy in pronunciation guaranteed by the first method as compared with the second.

The student who is initiated into the foreign language by the oral method is compelled to form the habit of articulating by direct oral imitation ; whereas the student whose initiation is through the written medium is compelled to form the converse habit and becomes proficient in doing what nature never intended the language learner to do ; and once the habit is acquired it is difficult or impossible to get rid of it.

Now whatever our ultimate aim may be in studying a foreign language, our capacity for using it (either in its written or spoken form, either receptively or productively) depends almost entirely on the quantity of speech-material we have memorized ; the more words we have memorized the richer will be the vocabulary at our command ; the more word-groups (*i.e.* successions of

words or sentences) we have memorized the greater will be our proficiency in understanding what we hear or read and in expressing orally or by writing what we wish to say. It matters not one whit whether expertness in conversation is our goal or whether our ultimate purpose is "the study and use of language as a fine art." Our aims may be purely utilitarian or they may be of the humanistic order—in both cases *our first and most urgent need is to master the technique of the language.*¹

And to do this we must memorize. "Whether we like it or not, whether the prospect is encouraging or not, it is quite certain that an easy command of the spoken (and even of the written) language can only be gained by the absolute mastery of thousands of combinations, regular and irregular. . . Now this task cannot be accomplished by means of intensive and laborious repetition work; it cannot be accomplished by the traditional methods of memorizing; book-work and perseverance will never lead us to the goal of our memorizing ambitions. . . . We must train ourselves to become spontaneous memorizers. . . . We must acquire the capacity for retaining a chance phrase which has fallen upon our ears in the course of a conversation or speech. . . . At a later stage of our study, it is true, we may make such acquisitions by *reading* instead of *listening*, but this will only be after we have become proficient in reproducing what we *hear*."²

The chief function of an oral course is to afford the student abundant opportunities for memorizing without tedium. A conversation course based on the forms of work set forth in this book, and carried out in accordance

¹ "No language attains its full disciplinary value until the initial stages have been passed, until it can be used freely and accurately for reading and writing, and if it be a living language for speaking. . . . Thus whether for training of the mind or the taste or the artistic faculties or the character, or for the increase of knowledge, the full discipline of language does not come into operation until the rudiments have been left behind."—*Report the Government Committee on Modern Languages*, §89.

² *The Principles of Language Study*, pp. 92 and 93.

with the nine essential principles of language-study¹ will enable the student, during the most critical stage of his work, to acquire the habit of memorizing in the right way. He will form his "catenic" and "semantic" associations as they should be formed; he will go again through the experiences which procured for him the mastery of the elementary form of his mother tongue. He will know little or nothing of the tedium of learning lists of words or word-groups by heart; for such memorizing will be carried out by dint of hearing words (and word-groups) repeated by the teacher in the ordinary course of the conversation-work.

III.

THE THREE TYPES OF ORAL COURSES.

THERE are different kinds of oral courses, each of which serves a specific purpose. An oral course may be required :

- (1) As a means of initiation into the elements of a language of which the pupil is entirely ignorant.
- (2) As a means of correcting those who are already more or less acquainted with the language, but who have formed wrong habits of study and bad habits in the actual use of the language.
- (3) As a means of furthering the progress of those who are already fairly proficient in the language.

In each of these three cases the term *conversation* has a specific meaning, which should be clearly understood.

1. *The Oral course as a method of initiation.*

In this case the terms *conversation* and *oral work* may practically be regarded as synonyms. The teacher,

¹ See *The Principles of Language Study*.

after having drawn up the programme of study that he considers the most suitable for his pupils, will proceed to carry out the various forms of work in the order and proportions in which they occur in his programme.

The pupils having no bad linguistic habits, the work of the teacher is comparatively easy, especially if they have no bad habits of study either.

The teacher's chief duties will be :

- (a) To ensure proper grading. The various forms of work must neither be too easy nor too difficult, for too easy lessons are tedious and too difficult ones are discouraging.
- (b) To maintain the right proportion between "receptive" and "productive" work, or to choose the right moments for replacing the former by the latter.
- (c) To take all precautions against the formation of bad habits such as "isolating," "over-analyzing," "insufficient catenizing," or "insufficient semanticizing."
- (d) To ensure unflagging interest but never at the expense of sound methods.
- (e) To encourage readiness and facility of expression ("Sprachfertigkeit"), but never at the expense of accuracy.

At the outset the teacher must draw up some sort of programme of study. In the second part of this book we have set forth, and classified, all the types of work likely to be of service in oral teaching. The designer of the course will examine these, note the specific purposes for which each is intended, select those which seem the most appropriate for his requirements, and determine approximately the moment at which to introduce them and the time to be spent on each. In doing this he will take into consideration, among other things, the age of his pupils and the length of time over which the whole course is to extend. His best plan will probably be to divide the oral course roughly into three stages :

Stage 1, which will be more particularly devoted to :

- (a) Forms of work which the student performs without having to speak ;
- (b) Systematic ear-training and pronunciation exercises.

Stage 2, devoted chiefly to imitation work and the more drill-like forms of conventional conversation

Stage 3, devoted to the less drill-like forms of work.

The programme may be modified from time to time in the light of the additional experience gained by the teacher and the results attained by the students.

2. *The Oral course as a method of correction.*

The corrective course will differ in many respects from the kind of course just outlined. The type of *conversation* exercises used will be more in accordance with the popular definition of the term "conversation." The pupils having previously acquired all sorts of wrong study-habits or language-habits the teacher's chief duty is to eliminate these and replace them by sound habits.

"Corrective programmes are designed to meet the special requirements of those who have previously studied the language in so disproportionate a manner that one or more of its four aspects (understanding, speaking, reading and writing) has, or have been, totally or partially neglected, or of those who have previously studied the language in so defective a manner that the unsound knowledge so acquired will have to be converted into sound knowledge.

"If the student frankly recognises the fact that his previous study has been conducted on a defective basis, if he is conscious of his failings, and sees clearly what is lacking, it will be relatively easy to deal with him. If, on the other hand, he is very satisfied with himself, is not prepared to acknowledge any other defects than that of a limited vocabulary and is unwilling that we should extirpate the grave flaws which stand as a barrier between his present attainments and the perfection towards which it is his aim to rise, then our task will be almost an impossible one. This type of student is by no means uncommon. . . . The most frequent case . . . is that in which the student has already attained considerable proficiency in reading. His written work is very defective, his speech far worse, and he is incapable of understanding anything we say to him unless we deliver ourselves word by word with a pronunciation distorted so as to conform

itself to his foreign ear. . . . Presuming, however, a willing pupil, we may take him in hand firmly and with authority, and treat him to a special corrective programme in order to convert his bad habits into sound ones."¹

Of the three types of oral course (Initiative, Corrective and Advanced), the corrective course makes the greatest demands on the teacher's capacities and requires the exercise of his judgment to the highest degree. In a course of this type the teacher has not only to cause the student to acquire new habits and new material, he also has to cause the student to break many of his existing habits and to unlearn much of his previously acquired language-material. Indeed, until the teacher has succeeded in breaking down the student's vicious linguistic habits it will be as difficult to cause him to assimilate new material as it is to cause a stove choked-up with ashes and slag to consume new fuel. So long as the student persists in focusing his attention on the *word*, he will be unable to assimilate the *word-group*; so long as he persists in translating into his mother-tongue what he hears, or translating from his mother-tongue what he wishes to say, he will be unable to form the proper sort of semantic associations; so long as he mentally reads and writes what he hears and says he will be unable to understand or to speak the language with the requisite rapidity or fluency; so long as he replaces foreign sounds by the sounds of his mother-tongue he will be unable even to hear the foreign sounds used by his teacher.²

The corrective oral course must consist of

- (a) Systematic ear-training and pronunciation exercises based largely on "nonsense words."³
- (b) Reproductive work.⁴
- (c) Strictly drill-like forms of conventional conversation.

¹ *The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages*, pp. 230, 231

² See *The Principles of Language Study*, Chapter V.

³ See *The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages*, p. 158.

⁴ See page 58.

It is also characterized by the absence of exercises in unconscious assimilation and of the freer forms of work. New habits may be acquired unconsciously, but old bad habits can only be got rid of consciously and by rigid discipline. An Englishman who has once acquired bad habits in using French may go to France and remain there for twenty years without curing himself of them.

"Never during the corrective course should the student be encouraged or even allowed to speak his own broken jargon. He will probably want to do so, and may urge that 'practice makes perfect,' etc., etc. The teacher may reply that practice in *broken English* indeed does result in perfect *broken English*, and that as the aim of the student is precisely to eradicate it, and not to foster and to encourage it, he must do his best to let it become atrophied by disuse. It will be time to talk about conversing in English when the student has acquired a sufficient stock of healthy units to enable him to do so without recourse to the broken dialect which it is their joint aim to extirpate."¹

3. *The Oral course for the purposes of more advanced work.*

This will be characterized by the use of the freer forms of work (numbered 42 to 49 in the second part of this book) and the more advanced type of unconscious assimilation. By the time the student has attained that degree of proficiency which will justify his making use of "Normal Conversation" the Oral Course, as far as he is concerned, will have served its purpose, and he may safely make an unrestricted use of the written medium, he may read both intensively and extensively, he may do all sorts of written exercises, and composition, and proceed henceforth in accordance with the more traditional methods.

IV.

THE ORAL METHOD IN SCHOOLS.

WHEN we read through the testimony offered by the authorities quoted earlier ; when we note how closely

¹ *The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages*, page 235.

their opinions in substance agree with those of the great majority of successful students of languages ; when we have critically examined the evidence afforded by those who have followed link by link the chain of reasoning which binds together the facts elicited and shows them as a unified whole, we cannot fail to see the conclusion to which they point, viz. : "*that written work should if possible be excluded from the earlier stages of language-study.*"

By excluding written work we virtually compel the student to develop those powers which will enable him to assimilate foreign languages at an ever-increasing rate of speed. By using the language as speech we cause the student to cover far more ground in a given time than he would cover by doing written exercises.¹

The above proposition is either true or false. If it is false, it is manifestly the duty of all concerned to prove it false ; if it is true it is just as manifestly the duty of all who have the interests of education at heart to urge its recognition and adoption in our schools.

What are the practical objections to devoting the first three to six terms exclusively to oral work? There appear to be three :

- (a) The difficulty or impossibility of setting any home-work is resented.
- (b) The difficulty that may be experienced in finding teachers competent to carry out such a course is believed to be great.
- (c) The apparent necessity of excluding the use of phonetic symbols is spoken of as a disadvantage.

Let us examine each of these objections in turn.

(a) It will indeed be impossible to set homework of the types now in current use, for we cannot exclude written work from the lesson without excluding it from the work done at home. But must homework necessarily be written ? Is it not possible to devise an alternative system ? There seems to be no grave difficulty

¹ Kittson says " twenty times more ground," see page 15.

in providing the schoolchild with instructions (written in his mother-tongue) telling him exactly what to do in order to recapitulate what he has learnt and so to prepare himself for the next lesson.¹ Should this plan be condemned as being an indirect form of translation, it may be noted that such work would not be inferior in its results to many forms of written homework which are recognised as perfectly legitimate.

Many are of opinion that a portion of each lesson should be devoted to teaching the pupils about the nature of language.

"It is as much our duty to teach our pupils right notions about the nature of language as it is the duty of the chemistry master to teach them right notions about the nature of matter."²

"We may utilise the preliminary period to teach the broad fundamental principles of the lexicological sciences. We may introduce the theory of phonetics and show how sounds are classified. . . . we may give him (the pupil) simple and interesting exercises dealing with the phonetics of his own language in order that he may better understand the phonetic system of the foreign language."³

"We may document the student on the nature of semantics and provide him with a simple series of exercises designed to show him the relations between words and thoughts, and the difference between meanings and functions. . . . We may also introduce the leading principles of inflexions, derivations, etc., taking our examples from and basing our exercises on the student's own language. . . . In certain cases we shall find it profitable to instruct the pupil in the theory of language-learning. . . . These indications, suggestions and exercises may be given either systematically or at odd moments. . . ."⁴

¹ E.g. "Look at the following objects, ask yourself in French what they are and answer your questions in French: a window, a door, a knife, a pen, a chair, etc." "Perform the following actions, ask yourself what you are doing and answer your own questions 'Take a book, open it, shut it, put it on the floor, pick it up again, put it on the table, etc., etc.'" "Think what a French boy would say if he wanted a piece of chalk, to borrow a knife," etc.

² E. C. Kittson, *Theory and Practice of Language Teaching*, page 2.

³ See Chapter X. of Jespersen's *How to Teach a Foreign Language*.

⁴ *The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages*, pp. 141, 142.

If homework must be given during the first stages, it may well take the form of exercises designed to give the pupils "right notions about the nature of language."

But should neither of these plans commend itself or seem feasible, a simpler and more obvious course is open to us, viz. to refrain from giving any homework at all during the oral stage. If the exclusive use of oral work has the advantages which are claimed for it, this absence of homework will be far more than compensated for by the gain of increased capacities for oral assimilation.¹

The time usually devoted to preparation for the language-lesson will thus be set free for other subjects of the school curriculum.² Or, instead of starting written French at the age of eleven the child would start learning spoken French at the age of nine or ten—and from what we know of the speech-assimilating capacities of the young child, he would be the gainer in every way.

(b) This second objection is no objection at all, it is a mere protest on the part of those whose ignorance of the foreign language renders them incompetent to use any modern methods whichever.

The question as to whether the average teacher is competent to use modern methods is not a new one; it crops up periodically, and is always in the forefront of discussions on the use and place of phonetics or on

¹ "Written work should be kept within reasonable limits. Traditional practice rather tends to exaggerate its importance. As a test of accuracy and of grasp of knowledge already acquired, a certain amount of it is indispensable. Its value as an educational instrument is much more doubtful; it cannot vie with the ear as the natural means of impressing concords, genders, order and idioms on the mind."—*Report of the Government Committee on Modern Languages*, § 112.

² "We recognise that the great extension of learning in modern times necessitates a rectification of proportions in school education. The time available in certain schools for the study of languages can no longer be so large a part of the whole as it has been even in the recent past"—*Report of the Government Committee on Modern Languages*, § 217

the desirability or undesirability of entrusting the language-lessons to foreigners.

"There were not wanting those, whether foreigners or others, who opposed the change of policy in regard to the modern language staff on the grounds that the English teachers would never possess a perfect command of the foreign tongue, and were therefore not qualified to teach it. Apparently they did not perceive the *reductio ad absurdum* of their whole argument; namely, that if the teachers who are devoting their whole lives to the study of language with advantages which include foreign residence and even foreign tuition, cannot acquire a sufficient command of the language to qualify them to teach it, the knowledge which schoolboys can acquire during a few hours a week for a few years must be infinitely more imperfect and indeed practically valueless, and that the whole teaching of foreign languages ought to be abandoned as a failure and waste of time."¹

(c) Phonetics has now a recognised place in language-study. All our authorities are now in agreement that teachers should carry into practice the theory elaborated so carefully and so patiently by the phoneticians. It is also held by our leading authorities that an extensive use should be made of phonetic symbols, more especially during the first stage,² even if only on the ground that ear-training exercises cannot be carried out without the use of those symbols. The phonetician may therefore hold that any procedure which excludes the use of symbols and transcription is a wrong procedure.

In setting forth the theory and arguments in favour of oral work, we have not been unmindful of this objection; indeed, as the writer himself is a keen phonetician³ it is not likely that he would underrate the value of the use of phonetic symbols. Those whom we have quoted as the stoutest protagonists of the oral method

¹ H. G. Atkins and H. L. Hutton, *The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages*, page 13.

² "The Teacher's first care should be to make his pupils perfectly familiar with the foreign language. To attain this end he will make use of phonetic transcription, which should be employed to the exclusion of the traditional spelling during the first period."—*Principles of Teaching recognised by the International Phonetic Association*.

³ See *What is Phonetics?* published by the International Phonetic Association

do not advocate blindly and fanatically the exclusion of any forms whatsoever of the non-oral medium, even during the early stages. When we speak of the temporary exclusion of reading and writing, we really mean the exclusion of reading *as a means of assimilating or memorizing* such speech material as words and sentences, and the exclusion of written *exercises* such as composition and translation.

There is no reason why reading and writing should not be used for specific auxiliary purposes. We have already suggested (on page 31) certain cases in which non-oral work may be used without any harmful consequences. We now suggest as an important auxiliary line of approach the systematic study of sounds and sound-combination by means of phonetic symbols. This is no part of the conversation-course proper but an essential concomitant to it. As Sweet says (in the passage quoted on page 3): "These (the purely oral exercises) are in fact the best possible substitute for a phonetic method, although they will be ten times more efficient if preceded by systematical training in phonetics." The writing of phonetic symbols on the blackboard or the presence of phonetic wall-charts does not in any way militate against the principle of oral work, but, on the contrary, contributes to its efficacy.

We venture to think that the only possible objections to the preliminary oral course have been fairly met, and we look forward with confidence to the time when it will be considered as the natural and indispensable prelude to the study of foreign languages in schools, and as such will be included in the curriculum of all schools both in this country and abroad.

V.

THE ORAL METHOD AND THE ADULT STUDENT.

IN the case of adult students it is more difficult to apply the principle of excluding written work. Unlike the

schoolchild who may receive four or five weekly hours of teaching during a period of from four to seven years, the adult generally receives fewer lessons per week, and is generally unwilling or unable to devote more than three years to the striving for the mastery of any particular language. In order, therefore, to attain his end successfully he is obliged to work in a more intensive manner, and rely largely on his personal initiative and private study. In one respect, however, many adult learners have an advantage over the schoolchild in that they may pursue their study in the country where the language is spoken. Those whose circumstances do not enable them to adopt this course must perforce make shift with lessons, private study and the occasional opportunity of practising with a native whose acquaintance they may be able to make.

It has been recommended by the Government Committee on Modern Languages "that there be established in London an institution similar in purpose to the School of Oriental Studies, to organise and facilitate the study of the greatest possible number of European tongues."¹ This is the sort of institution we have in mind when considering the place of the oral method in the language-study of adults.

Now it does not seem desirable or feasible to exclude the use of non-oral methods even for the period of one term. It is doubtful whether any teachers or students would consent to such a procedure; they would feel that the study of the language from the very outset must proceed on intensive lines and that the programme must comprise each and every means conducive towards the desired end. Does this, then, mean that for purposes of adult study the oral method is not to be used at all? By no means. The oral method must be used, but in a way which is appropriate to the needs of adult students.

In the first place a considerable portion of each lesson

¹ *Report of the Committee, § 70 and Recommendation 36.*

should be devoted to oral work as outlined in this book, in order to give the initial impetus to the student's powers of spontaneous assimilation. In the second place the student must be trained to convert the language-material contained in his books into real living speech.

"The main object of language teaching should be to fit the pupils to learn languages for themselves."¹

One of the textbooks for adult students should contain a large number of the conversation groups as set forth in the second part of the present work, printed in phonetic transcription and accompanied by as much explanatory matter as is necessary to cause them to be understood. The student must be taught to use these groups in the right way; he must be taught how to take a given question-and-answer unit, to pronounce it aloud and to memorize it (both catenically and semantically). He must be taught how to think the whole sentence integrally, and warned against the pernicious practice of piecing it together bit by bit while he is saying it. The oral work conducted during the lesson will give him a good idea of how to proceed when he is no longer in the presence of his teacher.

As we have already stated, the Oral Method is not a Complete Method in itself, but is a necessary feature or phase of the Complete Method. Those responsible for the organisation of teaching in institutions such as the one recommended by the Government Committee tend to consider it in this light and to favour the principle of the *Multiple Line of Approach*, i.e. "To approach the language from many different sides in many different ways, by means of many different forms of work."²

¹ *Report of the Committee*, § 70 and *Recommendation* 36.

² *The Principles of Language Study*, page 81. See also *ibid.*, Chapter XV.

Part II.

Forms of work suitable for use
in an Oral Course.

(SEE SYNOPTIC INDEX).

Forms of work suitable for use in an Oral Course.

(SEE *SYNOPTIC INDEX*).

ALTHOUGH in countless text-books and manuals we find an infinite variety of exercises, drills and methods of procedure, this is probably the first occasion on which a serious attempt has been made to subject them to analysis.

As the reader will observe on referring to the synoptic table at the end, the analysis has been very thorough ; we have made every effort to put into some form of logical order that heterogeneous mass of devices, drills, exercises and practices generally considered collectively as the " conversational method."

Our ultimate purpose is to make it possible for teachers or writers of text-books to compose a rational and well-graded oral course ; the first step towards this end is to collect from all sources all those forms of work which seem likely to play a part in such a course, to reduce them to their component elements and to classify them. Having examined them, we see that they fall into two broad classes :

- I. *Purely receptive work, i.e.* exercises which do not call for any verbal response on the part of the student.
- II. *Receptive and productive work, i.e.* exercises which do not require the student to be silent.

Purely Receptive Work

(i.e. *Forms of Work in which the Student is Silent.*

The purpose of an oral course, let us remember, is to give the pupils opportunities not only of practice in expressing themselves in speech, but also of practice in understanding what is said to them.

In accordance with more than one of the principles of language-study, the pupil is to be given ample opportunities for "receptive" work ; he cannot be expected to *produce* until he has *received* ; he cannot be expected to say things with any degree of accuracy until he has heard them said on one or more occasions. Students who are already more or less proficient in the language and have acquired good language-learning habits are able to receive rapidly and to imitate immediately ; indeed the great majority of the forms of work set forth in this book, are designed on this assumption. The beginner, however, whose stock of language material is non-existent (or the student whose knowledge is confined to written forms and to points of theory) is incapable of successfully combining these two processes : either he focuses his attention on what he hears (in which case he cannot prepare his response) or he focuses his attention on what he is going to say (and thereby fails to observe correctly what he hears).

The mental attitude of those who are told to do nothing but listen and observe is entirely different from the attitude of those who are expecting at every instant to be called upon to respond. Only those who have experimented on themselves can fully realize the fundamental difference between the two kinds of attitude. In the first case the mind, without losing its alertness, is calm and untroubled ; free from that nervous and almost paralyzing preoccupation : "What am I going to say in answer ? How shall I construct it, and how shall I pronounce it ? The beginner is able to observe correctly what he hears. In the other case the student's attention is divided ; while listening to what is said, he is preparing what he will be called upon to say ; this is often too great a task for the beginner, and he fails to acquire that most valuable of all language-learning habits : *correct observation*. The consciousness of being expected to produce, at all costs, some sort of answer, is responsible for many linguistic failures. When the student has arrived at the stage in which he can successfully combine

the two processes he is indeed far on the path towards his ultimate goal, and one of the aims of the language teacher should be to bring the student to that point in the shortest possible time.

Another advantage of Receptive work is to be noted, on grounds of economy : there is no limit to the number of students who may participate in it. For ordinary question and answer work a class should not consist of more than twelve students (unless recourse is had to chorus work) ; for normal conversation, in the generally accepted sense of the word, the class should not consist of more than four students at the outside. But most forms of Receptive work can be carried on just as easily with a hundred students as with one. Indeed, the teacher will find it easier and far more interesting to talk to a large class, for he will feel that at least a few of the students understand everything he says.

For these reasons we must certainly, in the case of beginners, set apart a portion of each lesson for types of work which will afford the fullest opportunities of hearing and of observing the teacher's speech.

As we shall see later, however, there is no rigid line of demarcation between the two broad divisions mentioned on page 39. Some of the simpler forms of question and answer work (*e.g.* in which the pupil answers merely "yes" or "no") are not far removed from some of the forms of Receptive work which we are about to examine.

Exercises in Unconscious Oral Assimilation.¹

Of all the types of work imaginable this is perhaps the most rudimentary and the one which is most in accordance with the "natural" process by which we

¹ Such exercises as these are fully described in *The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages*, pp. 131-137, 142-148, 155-157. See also *The Principles of Language-Study*, Chapter VII., pp. 95-96.

have assimilated the material of our mother-tongue. It consists simply in the teacher's talking to the students in that language which is the object of study.

The students are told in advance that they are going to be given an opportunity of hearing the language spoken, of listening calmly without being expected to make any attempts at analysis or efforts to say anything in their turn ; that they will not be required to respond in any way ; incidentally they may observe anything that happens to interest them (*e.g.* sounds, fluency, cadence, tones, words or word groups), but, generally speaking, they should not focus their attention, but rather allow it to be *diffused* over the whole of what they hear or see. Their only efforts should be devoted to making out the general sense of what is being said. Causing the students to focus their attention, speaking slowly and over-distinctly, isolating any words, throwing in an occasional word of translation—all these things tend to destroy the essential feature of this type of work by converting it into an exercise in *Conscious Assimilation* (which will be dealt with later).

FORM OF WORK I.

Unconscious Oral Assimilation

FOR ELEMENTARY COURSES.

When adapted for the use of beginners these exercises should be accompanied by an abundance of gestures ; the teacher must point to (or towards) every object named ; verbs such as *to go, to come, to take, to put, to read, to write, to open, to shut*, etc., must be acted ; gestures and face-expressions of affirmation, negation, interrogation or doubt must be freely indulged in, not necessarily ostentatiously or dramatically, but *naturally*.

The following is a typical example of a "talk" for the earliest stage :

"This is a book and this is a box.—Look at the book.—Look at the box.—I'm going to put the book on the table and the box

on the chair.—Where's the book now?—It's on the table.—And the box?—It's on the chair.—Is the book on the table?—Yes, it is.—Is the book on the chair?—No, it isn't; the box is on the chair.—Now look at me; I'm going to open the book and to open the box.—There!—The book's open and so is the box.—Now I'm going to open the door.—The door's open.—Now I'm shutting the door.—It's shut.—I'm going to shut the book and the box.—I take the box and put it in my pocket.—Why, what's this in my pocket?—A pencil!—This is a pencil.—I'll put it on the table.—What else have I got here?—A knife.—Look at this knife.—See me open it and shut it again.—I'm going to put the knife on the chair.—Look at that window over there.—Is it open or shut?—It's open.—I'm going to shut it.—Etc., etc., etc."

Exercise typical of a later stage :

"I'm touching the table—the floor—the chair. I'm going to touch the ceiling. I can't. I can't touch the ceiling; it's too high. I can touch the blackboard easily because it isn't too high. If the ceiling were lower I could touch it; if my arm were longer I could touch it, but my arm isn't long enough and the ceiling's too high. I'm putting this pencil into my pocket, this box too, this piece of paper too. Now I'm going to try to put this book into my pocket. I can't. Why not? Because the book's too big. I can put that small book into my pocket, but not this big one. If my pocket were larger I could put this book into it, but my pocket isn't large enough, it's too small." (Other examples: Table too heavy for me to lift. Table leg too strong for me to break. Words too small for me to read at this distance, etc., etc.)

FORM OF WORK 2. UNCONSCIOUS ORAL ASSIMILATION FOR CORRECTIVE COURSES.

Among all the types of exercise suitable for corrective courses unconscious assimilation occupies a very unimportant place. A corrective course is essentially intended to break bad linguistic habits, and bad habits can only be broken by conscious efforts. A person who has formed the habit of mispronouncing and of generally "massacring" English may come to this country and live for twenty years among people who afford him daily and hourly opportunities for listening to the English of England, and yet, at the end of twenty years he continues

to mispronounce, to misintone, to misconstruct and generally to misuse the language just as fluently as if he had remained at home. Moreover, so many forms of work are undeniably useful to students needing a corrective course that it would seem a pity (if only from the point of view of economy) to devote to unconscious assimilation time which would be more profitably spent on other things.

The only case in which exercises in unconscious assimilation are likely to be of service in a corrective course is when we have to deal with students whose chief defect is an inability to understand fluent or rapid speech, students who can understand only by dint of translating mentally whatsoever words they do happen to catch. In such cases exercises in unconscious oral assimilation are of very real use, and the student should be treated to large and frequent doses of this form of work in its most fluent and rapid form, the teacher drowning his pathetic requests of "less ra-pid-ly and more slow-ly if you please," and so fatiguing his analysing and translating capacities that he is reduced to relative passivity.

FORM OF WORK 3. UNCONSCIOUS ORAL ASSIMILATION FOR ADVANCED COURSES.

When living in the country in which the language is spoken the more advanced student can spend one or more useful hours weekly in attending lectures (on any subject, preferably not linguistic), in witnessing theatrical performances (of modern plays), in short, giving himself a reasonable number of opportunities of hearing spoken English¹ used as a medium for communicating things of interest. But this has little to do with the conducting of a conversation course. When, for the improvement of his powers of understanding, the student is dependent upon his lessons, the teacher should endeavour to devote

¹Assuming English to be the foreign language.

at least half an hour a week to reading aloud suitable texts (for preference modern plays by such authors as H. A. Jones, Pinero, Arnold Bennett, H. A. Vachell, and Bernard Shaw. This may not be considered as forming part of a "conversation course," but, in any case, it suggests itself as a useful adjunct to the course, and the matter so read will serve as a subject of conversation between teacher and pupils.

Exercises in Conscious Oral Assimilation.

In our survey of the various forms of work available for a purely oral course, we now come to another group of exercises and drills requiring no verbal response on the part of the students. Whereas the first group required their diffused attention, the second group calls for their focused attention. The students are told to concentrate their minds on particular things, to observe no longer in a desultory manner but systematically and deliberately. It is not enough to tell the students to concentrate their attention; they must also be told on what things they should concentrate it.

The untrained language-learner is incapable of observing certain things at all unless he is specifically told to do so. If he is merely interested in what he calls "word-learning" he will pay attention to the general forms of isolated words without noticing the sounds contained in them or the attendant grammatical phenomena. If he is mainly interested in isolated sounds, he will fail to notice such things as stress, cadence, fluency, or intonation. If grammar is his main object of interest he will not pay sufficient attention to the pronunciation or the meaning of what he hears. If he pays exclusive attention to the meanings of the words and sentences he hears, he will pay none to other things. The reason

why the average English student learns French with such difficulty is because he has not formed the habit of observing the gender of the nouns he hears. When somebody speaks to him about "un dictionnaire" he is so interested in the word "dictionnaire," and so intent on associating it with its English equivalent "dictionary," or with the thing for which it stands, that he fails to notice whether it is preceded by "un" or by "une." Similarly the French student is so intent on associating English words with their meanings that he fails to notice such things as stress or cadence.

The student, in the early stages, cannot observe many different things at one and the same time, so he generally forms the habit of always observing one and the same thing and ignoring the rest ; hence the need for calling his attention specifically to all the things which are of importance.

He should be told at different times to observe more especially the following things :

1. Individual sounds.
2. The manner in which sounds follow each other (glides, etc.).
3. On what words the emphasis is placed.
4. The syllables on which the stress falls.
5. The intonation of the words and sentences.
6. The general acoustic effect of the whole word or sentence.
7. The grammatical form of the word (the nature of the inflexion if any).
8. Any peculiarities of syntax (agreement, word order, etc.).
9. The exact meaning of the word, compound or sentence.

It is generally well to tell the student at the same time what he should not pay attention to. If he is supposed to be learning how to use the spoken form of a language,

he should be told not to dissipate his attention on considerations of etymology or orthography. At appropriate moments and on other occasions he will be afforded every opportunity of satisfying his legitimate curiosity on such points. He must also be warned definitely and repeatedly against mentally translating into his own language what he hears.

To the casual observer, there may not seem to be a great difference between unconscious and conscious Oral Assimilation. In both cases the student is silent, and confines himself to listening to the teacher. In both cases the teacher names objects, performs actions, relates stories, and keeps up a continuous flow of speech. There is, however, an appreciable difference between the two. In the first case the student is invited to give diffused attention, to make no conscious efforts at retention, to consider the proceedings in an impersonal and detached way as something quite apart from a *lesson*. In the present case, the student is told to focus his attention on certain things, to make distinct efforts to observe and to retain, and to consider the exercise as a preliminary to types of work in which he will have to play a more active part. He should in turn carefully observe the various features of what he hears, each in its turn : sounds, glides, fluency, stress, cadence and tones ; lexicological, grammatical and semantic peculiarities. He should (at least after the first few hearings) repeat mentally, in unison with the teacher, whatever he hears, and while doing so make every effort to associate the signifying words with the things signified by them. When listening to the word "window" he should look at and think of the window ; the words "pull" or "push" or "shut" suggest the actual muscular sensations associated with the movements described ; words such as "up," "down," "there," "here," should call forth the corresponding reactions. This mental alertness and activity, moreover, will have the effect of keeping the student too busy to translate to himself the various words or sentences that he hears.

Examples of Conscious Oral Assimilation Exercises
suitable for a Beginners' Course (and in many
cases for a Corrective Course).

FORM OF WORK 4. NOUN GROUPS.

This is a book.—pen.—pencil.—knife.—key.—letter.—stamp
etc.

This isn't a book.—pen.—pencil. etc.

That's the door.—window.—ceiling.—floor. etc.

This is my book.—pen.—head.—hand.—coat. etc.

I have (or I've got) a book.—pen.—pencil. etc.

I'm touching the book.—table.—chair.—blackboard. etc.

This is made of wood.—glass.—leather.—iron.—paper.—
silver. etc.

*Suitable Nouns.*¹ Those denoting small objects on
table or in pocket; pieces of furniture; parts of room;
objects visible through a window; articles of clothing;
parts of body; countries, towns, etc., seen on wall-map;
objects seen in pictures and wall charts; materials of
which objects are made; simple things rapidly sketched
or indicated on blackboard (*e.g.* square, triangle, word,
letter, dot, cross, comma, etc.).

FORM OF WORK 5. QUALIFICATIVE GROUPS.

This is white.—black.—red.—large.—small.—wide.—hard.—
round. etc.

This book (box. etc.) is white.—black. etc.

This is a black (—red—green—large, etc.) book.—box. etc.

This isn't white.—black.—large. etc.

This isn't a black (large, etc.) book. etc.

¹ Should the learning of nouns prove a profitable or interesting
form of work, the teacher would do well to make (with the
assistance of his pupils) an exhaustive collection of miscellaneous
objects and substances (buttons, boxes, cards, stones, marbles,
peas, beans, nuts, etc. of various colours and sizes; a pin, a
needle, a nail, a screw, a match, a ring, a cube, a glass, a drawing
pin, a bottle; a piece of coal, iron, brass, copper, lead, paper,
leather, silk, velvet, cloth, ribbon, tape, string, cotton, match-
boxes full of sand, earth, salt, coffee, tea, etc., etc.). These can
be kept in a drawer, box, or cabinet either loose or arranged
(and if possible) mounted on cards. This collection will be of use
not only for teaching nouns and adjectives but also for the form
of work to be described under the heading "Imperative Drill."

Suitable Qualificatives.—Black, white, blue, red, green, yellow, brown, grey, large, big, small, little, wide, broad, narrow, thick, thin, high, low, hard, soft, square, round, rough, smooth, cold, warm, hot, light, dark, heavy, light, English, French, etc.

FORM OF WORK 6. DETERMINATIVE GROUPS.

This is my (—your—his—her—John's—Mr. B's) book.—pen.—hat.—chair.—place. etc.

These are my (—your—his—her—John's—our—your—their) books.—matches.—papers.—chairs. etc.

This is mine.—yours.—his.—hers.—ours.—yours.—theirs.—John's.

I'm going to count the chairs (—books—pupils, etc.): one, two, three, four, etc.

I've got a book.—two (—three—four—five, etc.) books.

I'm going to take a match. (—two—three—four—etc.) matches.

Here are some matches; this is the first.—second.—third. etc.

Mr. B. is looking at us. He can see me.—you.—him.—her.—us.—them.

I can see him.—you. (He—she—we—they) can see him.

FORM OF WORK 7. VERB GROUPS.

I'm going to the door.—window.—blackboard.—table, etc.

I'm coming here.—to the table.—to you. etc.

I'm sitting on the chair.—table.—sofa. etc.

I'm standing here.—at (—near, by) the door.—at the blackboard. etc.

I'm looking at the ceiling.—door.—wall.—picture. etc.

I'm opening the book.—box.—knife.—door. etc.

I'm shutting the book.—box.—my eyes. etc.

I'm taking the book.—a book.—my book.—the red book.—the books.—the pencil. etc.

I'm putting the book (etc.) on the table. (—chair, etc.)—in my pocket. etc.

I'm pushing (—pulling) the table.—chair. etc.

I'm dropping (—throwing) the box. (—pen.—pencil.—chalk.—card) on the floor. etc.

I'm picking up the box.—pen.—pencil. etc.

I'm writing (on the paper.—card.—blackboard. etc.).

I'm reading (the book.—my book.—the paper. etc.).

The use of the present progressive tense may be replaced by forms such as:

I've taken—I've just taken—I took—I'm going to take—I'm just going to take—I often take—I shall take—I'll take—When I spoke to you just now I was taking . . . etc., etc.

Suitable Verbs : To go, come, sit, get up, stand, go out, come in, come back, look at, speak, open, shut, take, put, push, pull, drop, pick up, write, read, move, touch, rub, fold, scratch, cut, break, tear, burn, light, rub out, turn, hold out, hold up, etc.

FORM OF WORK 8. PLACE GROUPS.

This match is on (—under—in—outside—in front of—behind—beside—over—under—against—near) the box, etc.

I'm standing behind (—in front of—beside—near) the table, etc.

The book's in the box.—the drawer.—my pocket, etc.

The table (—chair—door—window, etc.) is here.—there.—over there.—near me.—near you. etc.

The table's between the door and the window, etc.

The foregoing groups are typical of those intended to provide the student with an elementary vocabulary. Special groups may be composed to teach certain points relating more especially to grammatical phenomena. English being exceptionally poor as regards inflected forms (fortunately for foreign students !) we shall choose a few examples of French and German groups to show what should be done in the way of teaching " grammar " by this method.

FORM OF WORK 9. GRAMMAR GROUPS.

French Gender.

Voici le crayon—le papier—le livre, etc.

Voici la table—la boîte—la plume, etc.

Voici le crayon—la table—le papier—la boîte, etc.

Needless to say in these and in all similar cases there should be no pause whatever between the determinative and the noun.

C'est mon crayon—mon papier—mon livre, etc.

C'est ma boîte—ma plume—ma clé, etc.

Voilà un crayon—un canif—un livre, etc.

Voilà une table—une boîte—une plume, etc.

Le plafond est blanc. La craie est blanche, etc.

Ce papier est vert. Cette carte est verte, etc.

German Case.

Das ist der Bleistift—Stuhl—Stock, etc.

Ich sehe—habe—nehme—berühre, etc.) den Bleistift—Stuhl—Stock, etc.

Das ist (—Ich sehe—Ich habe—Ich nehme, etc.) die Feder—Karte—Schachtel, etc.

Das ist (—Ich sehe, etc.) das Buch—Papier—Tintenfass, etc.

Das sind (—Ich sehe, etc) die Bücher, Bleistifte, etc.

Ich schreibe mit dem (—einem—meinem) Bleistift(e), etc

Ich schreibe mit der (—dieser—meiner) Feder, etc.

Ich schneide mit dem (—einem—meinem) Messer, etc.

Ich sehe mit den Augen, etc.

Das ist der Bleistift des Herrn A.—der Frau A.—des Fräuleins A.

Das ist der Bleistift.—Ich nehme (—sehe, etc.) den Bleistift.

Ich schreibe mit dem Bleistift(e). Das ist die Spitze des Bleistifts, etc.

German Plural.

Das ist der Bleistift. Das sind die Bleistifte, etc.

Das ist die Karte. Das sind die Karten, etc.

Das ist das Buch. Das sind die Bücher, etc.

Das ist das Fenster. Das sind die Fenster, etc.

Ich habe den Stock. Ich habe die Stöcke, etc.

Ich schreibe mit dem Bleistifte. Ich schreibe mit den Bleistiften, etc.

*Declension of the German Definite Article.**Nominative.*

Das ist der Bleistift.—die Schachtel.—das Buch.

Das sind die Bleistifte.

Das sind die Schachteln.

Das sind die Bücher.

Das ist der Stuhl—die Karte.—das Papier.

Das sind die Stühle.

Das sind die Karten.

Das sind die Papiere.

Accusative.

Ich habe (—sehe, etc.)—

—den Bleistift.—die Schachtel.—das Buch.—die Bleistifte.

—die Schachteln

—die Bücher.

Ich gehe an (neben, etc.) den Stuhl.—die Tür.—das Fenster, etc.

Ich lege—

—den Bleistift

—die Schachtel

—das Buch

} auf den Stuhl—die Karte—das Papier.

—die Bleistifte }
 —die Schachteln } auf die Stühle—die Karten—die Papiere.
 —die Bücher }
 (or Ich habe den Bleistift auf den Stuhl gelegt, etc., etc.)

Dative.

Der Bleistift }
 Die Schachtel } liegt auf { dem Stuhl(e).
 Das Buch } { der Karte.
 Die Bleistifte }
 Die Schachteln } legen auf { den Stühlen.
 Die Bücher } { den Karten.
 Ich stehe am Tisch.—an der Tür.—am Fenster, etc. { den Papieren.

Genitive.

Ich bin der Besitzer des Bleistifts.—der Schachtel.—des Buches, etc.

These and dozens of similar groups easily composed by the teacher are of special value in a Beginner's Course. In every lesson the teacher may spend ten minutes or so in going through a certain number of these, speaking and acting deliberately, and introducing varied repetitions.

As this is assumed to be a Conversation Course, such lessons as these will be almost the only source of the students' initial vocabulary and grammatical material and indeed no better source can be imagined than the spoken word associated in each case with that for which it stands.

It will have been noticed that most of the foregoing examples are based on the objects to be found in the classroom or indeed in most rooms and on actions which can be easily performed. Preference should generally be given to groups of this kind (called "Ostensive" Groups). The associations formed will be of the most immediate or concrete character; to learn the name of an object while looking at the object itself or to learn a verb while watching the performance of the action designated by it is the surest and most effective way not only of acquiring vocabulary, but also of assimilating the facts of accidence and sentence-structure.¹

But conscious oral assimilation need not be confined

to "Ostensive" groups such as these; we may have recourse to "Contextual"¹ groups (in which immediate association is replaced by other methods of associating words with their meanings, such as association by *definition* or *context*).

Examples of "Definition Groups." (So called because each statement is a kind of rough definition.)

The horse is an animal.
 London's a town.
 London's the capital of England
 England's a country.
 Iron's a metal.
 A hat's something we wear.
 A person who teaches is called a teacher.
 A pen's a thing we write with.

Examples of "Context Groups." (So called because the student will generally grasp the meaning of the new word by considering its context.)

When I write I take a pen or a pencil.
 A boot's made of leather.
 A knife's used for cutting.
 January's the first month of the year.
 Monday comes between Sunday and Tuesday.

¹ "There are four ways and four ways only of furnishing a student with the meaning of given foreign units:

- "1. *By Immediate Association*, as when we point to the object or a picture of the object designated by a noun or pronoun, when we perform the action designated by a verb, when we point to a real example of the quality designated by an adjective, or when we demonstrate in similar ways that which is designated by a preposition of place, or certain categories of adverbs.
- "2. *By Translation* as when we give the nearest native equivalent or equivalents of the foreign unit.
- "3. *By Definition*, as when we give a synonym or paraphrase of the word or word-group, or a description of that which is designated by it.
- "4. *By Context*, as when we embody the unit in sentences which will make its meaning clear (*e.g.* January is the first month of the year; London is the capital of England)."

—*The Principles of Language Study*, pp. 132-133.

Two and two make four.
 We see with our eyes.
 London's in England.

Other examples of these two orders will be suggested by the numerous groups given under the heading "Conventional Conversation."

FORM OF WORK 10.

Imperative Drill.

In the nine forms of work just described the student merely plays the part of listener, his sole occupation being to receive impressions either on the margin or in the focus of his consciousness.

Were it not for psychologists telling us that no work can be purely passive, we should be inclined to say that those forms of work require no mental activity whatever on the part of the students. However that may be, the exercises coming under the heading "Imperative Drill" do necessitate a very concrete physical response on the part of the learners, for, although still remaining silent, they are required to execute orders given to them in the language they are learning.

This is a form of work to be recommended for the very earliest stage for it will be found that it is a source of great encouragement to those who are most in need of encouragement. A student whose articulation is so poor and whose capacity for constructing correct sentences is so weak that he cannot be allowed to speak finds compensating comfort in the fact that his power of understanding enables him to carry out instructions given him in the foreign tongue. Imperative Drill is also of considerable use in the case of a certain type of corrective course. Many foreign students who can read, write, and even speak English are unable to understand anything that is said to them except when it is articulated word by word in "foreigners' English." In

the case of such students five or six minutes of each lesson may with advantage be devoted to the type of work we are describing. It is an exercise which may be graded with nicety and may range from the elementary "get up" (accompanied by an unmistakable gesture) to the advanced "Take the fourth book from the side nearest the window, from the second shelf; open it at page 65 and point to the first word" (without any gesture at all).

Imperative drill is one of the forms of work requiring the focused attention of the learner, but let it be noted that his attention should be focused not on the language material itself (*i.e.* the sounds, stress, cadence, tones, grammatical mechanism, etc.), but on the *meaning* of what is said to him. In order that he may really concentrate on the meaning, the attention he gives to the language material must necessarily be of the diffused order. Thus if the teacher says "Would you mind going to the door?" the student will not be actively conscious of the form of the command, of the sounds contained in it, of the relative rapidity with which its different parts are enunciated, of the degree of stress, of the place and nature of the tones, etc., but he will be intensely conscious of the action he is to make in response to the command, and will consciously perform it the instant the teacher has finished the sentence.

Gesture, of course, plays a most important part in Imperative Drill; indeed, during the initial stage the learner obeys the gestures he sees far more than he does the words he hears. In the case of a student absolutely ignorant of the language, the procedure is roughly as follows:

The teacher says "get up," and makes the appropriate sign. The student has not understood the words but he does understand the sign and he gets up. The teacher says "sit down," and the student obeys the gesture. This pair of actions is performed two or three times, and an association is established between the words, the signs and the action. "Get up" says the

teacher again, this time without gesture; and the student gets up, and when told to sit down will sit down.

The teacher holds out a book to the student and says: "Take this book." The student takes it—he would have done so if the teacher had remained silent. "Give it to me," says the teacher, and the student gives it to the teacher, even as we give up our tickets to the collector at the railway station. After a few repetitions the student will obey the same commands though they are no longer accompanied by gestures. Usually the gesture diminishes in intensity with each repetition. On the first occasion, for instance, the teacher may almost force the book into the hand of the student; on the second occasion he holds it towards the student; on the third he may move the book slightly towards him, on the next he may merely glance at the book, and on the final occasion make no gesture whatever. When a given command is repeated after the lapse of some minutes (or some days) it will be necessary to reintroduce the gestures, but the general tendency is always towards the elimination of gesture.

Examples.

Get up. Sit down. Get up. Come here. Go there.—over there.—to the door.—to the window.—to the blackboard.—to the table. Go back to your place. Sit down.

Take this book. Open it. Shut it. Put it on the table.—chair.—floor. Pick it up. Give it to me. Take this box. Open it. Shut it, etc.

Take this matchbox. Take a match out of it. Put the match on the table. Take another match out of the box. Put it on the table beside the first, etc., etc. Put the matches back into the box; shut it and give it to me.

Look at the window.—the ceiling.—the door.—me.—your feet.—your left hand, etc., etc.

Touch the chair.—the floor.—the table.—your head.—your nose.—your foot, etc.

Raise your two arms.—left arm.—right arm.—right foot.—left foot.—head. Fold your arms. Cross your legs, etc.

Bring me a book.—pencil.—pen.—that book.—the red book.—the book on the table.—those books over there.

Go to the door and open it. Take this stick and put it in that corner. Bring your chair here and sit down. Take this book and give it to Mr. A., etc.

Go to that box¹ and take a piece of string out of it. Make a knot in the string. Twist it round your finger. Take this knife and cut the string into three pieces.

Take a piece of paper. Tear it in halves; give me one half and put the other half on the table. Take a match out of the box and break it into three pieces. Put one piece on the table, another on the shelf and the remaining piece in your pocket.

Take the pieces of coloured ribbon that you'll find in that box. Hang the longest one over the back of the chair; give me the shortest one and put the other one back into the box.

Come and fetch the chair which is behind me and put it beside me.—in front of me.—in the corner.—beside Mr. A., etc.

Go and get that book and open it at page 15.—45.—108. etc.

The teacher will have no difficulty in increasing and developing these examples to an unlimited extent, especially with the help of the lists of nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs of place given in connection with "Forms of Work 4 to 8."

Needless to say, the strict imperative form (in the grammatical sense) need not be adhered to. Indeed, it will be found advantageous to change the form of the commands in many ways.

Examples.

Get up.

Please get up.

Get up please.

Just get up.

Will you (please—just) get up?

Would you mind (just) getting up?

You might (just) get up.

I want you to get up.

I should like you to get up.

(Just) get up, will you?

Should the teacher find it expedient, he may use two forms of Imperative Drill. At certain moments, instead of advising his pupils to give their *diffused* attention to the commands, he may suggest that they observe *consciously* the form in which the commands are given (choice and order of words, sounds, tones, etc.). As a

¹ The box containing the assortment of materials (as described in the footnote to page 48) is of particular value for this sort of work.

result of so doing an observant pupil may become proficient in *giving* commands ; in such a case he may occasionally be invited to take the teacher's place and issue commands to his fellow pupils.

Receptive and Productive Work

(i.e. *Forms of Work Requiring a Verbal Response on the Part of the Student.*)

These may be divided into three broad categories :

- a. Reproduction.
- b. Conventional Conversation.
- c. Normal Conversation.

In the first case the student merely repeats something in imitation of the teacher.

In the second case the student participates in a conventionalized form of conversation, generally by answering questions put to him by the teacher.

In the third case the student and teacher converse naturally and normally on the ordinary topics of everyday life.

Reproduction.

One of the most obvious and elementary forms of work in which the student is not silent is that to which we may apply the term *reproduction*. The pupil is invited to articulate language material in imitation of his teacher. The scope of this form of work is very wide, ranging from the reproduction of isolated sounds to the reproduction of long sentences. It may be used

for many and various purposes and in almost every case it marks the transition from silent work to the active participation of the student in a real conversation.

FORM OF WORK 11. REPRODUCTION OF ISOLATED SOUNDS.

The teacher articulates various sounds and asks the students to reproduce what they hear :

" Now listen to me please and try to make this sound exactly as I do :

i:, i:, i:, i:, i: very long," etc.

One of the uses of this exercise is to train students in the habit of isolating and of prolonging sounds : a necessary phase in their phonetic training.

FORM OF WORK 12. REPRODUCTION OF COMBINATIONS OF SOUNDS.

The students articulate in imitation of the teacher various combinations such as [pɑ:], [bɑ:], [tɑ:], etc. ; [rɑ:], [trɑ:], [prɑ:], [ɑ:p], [ɑ:b], [ɑ:t], [ɑ:tn], etc.

FORM OF WORK 13. REPRODUCTION OF ISOLATED WORDS.

The students repeat after the teacher lists of words prepared and graded in advance.¹

Examples.

Be, been, see, key, tea, eat, meat, week, green, etc. .

Give, live, bit, hill, sit, till, six, etc.

Larger, smaller, better, honour, doctor, Canada, etc.

FORM OF WORK 14. REPRODUCTION OF TONES.²

The teacher will intone in various ways prepared lists of words and sentences, and ask the students to imitate what they hear.

¹ See *A First Course of English Phonetics, Systematic Pronunciation Exercises, and Sounds and Spellings*, by the author of the present work.

² See my *Grammar of Spoken English and English Intonation*.

The three chief English tones are :

(a) The falling tones as used in categoric statements :
 ↘Here ! ↘There ! ↘Mine ! ↘One ! ↘Two ! ↘Yes ! ↘No !
 etc.

(b) The rising tone as used in dubitatives :
 ↗Here ? ↗There ? ↗Mine ? ↗One ? ↗Two ? etc.

(c) The rising-falling-rising tone as often used in
 correcting or in polite contradiction :
 ↗Here ! ↘There ! ↗Mine ! ↘None ! ↗Two ! etc.

One of the objects of this book is to set forth in logical order and sequence specimens of *all* the forms of work which may be of utility in an oral course. Now if a pupil while conversing makes a mistake, if he says something un-English or speaks in an un-English way he must be corrected. If the mistake crops up again and again, the pupil must be so corrected as to eliminate if possible the error in question : he must be corrected deliberately and systematically, and the teacher from time to time will devote one or more minutes to such systematic correction.

Should the student persistently make the English vowel in *see* too short, the teacher will call his attention to this shortcoming and ask him to repeat twenty or so words containing this long vowel. Should the student persistently pronounce the suffix *-tion* as [ʃə:n] or [ʃɔn], the teacher will point out that English people pronounce it as [ʃn̩], and will give him twenty or so examples, and ask him to repeat them. Should the student habitually give the rising intonation to such questions as " When ? " " Where ? " " Why ? " " When did you go ? " " Why did he come ? " the teacher must devote a minute or more out of the sixty to training him to use the falling intonation.

According to the *principle of accuracy* the student must not be given opportunity to form habits of inaccuracy, hence the necessity of interludes in the conversation lesson devoted to the prevention or cure of

inaccuracies by means of "reproduction exercises" such as those we are now examining.

FORM OF WORK 15. REPRODUCTION OF ELEMENTARY SENTENCES.

In describing "Forms of Work 4 to 8" a number of sentences were suggested as being suitable for Conscious Oral Assimilation. We noted that these constitute the initial vocabulary of the beginner, the nucleus to which a mass of linguistic material will be attracted so as to accumulate about it later on. When the student has had ample and repeated opportunities of hearing these sentences he may be considered ripe for reproducing them, and the teacher in due course will say:

"Now repeat these sentences after me, imitating me as closely as possible:

This is a book.—pen.—pencil. etc. (See p. 48.)

FORM OF WORK 16. REPRODUCTION OF CONVERSATIONAL SENTENCES.

This sort of work is, of course, particularly suitable for a Beginner's Course or for a Corrective Course. It will take another form in the case of more advanced students. Those who come to us for the sole purpose of enriching their stock of conversational material expect to be taught new conversational formulæ, and indeed the conscientious teacher has made a collection of these and is ready to teach them.

Examples.

I hope I'm not troubling you (too much).

Now there's something special I want to ask you.

I quite agree with you.

Are you sure you can spare it?

I hardly know what to answer.

There's no doubt about it.

You mustn't pay attention to things of that sort.

That's just the bother. Etc., etc.

Now assuming that we have collected from 100 to 1000 useful sentences of this sort, each of which is more

or less unfamiliar to our student, the best way to teach them is to cause him to *repeat* them after us. Hence the teaching of new forms of speech comes under the heading of *Reproduction*. This does not necessarily mean that such sentences should be taught in list form; indeed, it is generally preferable to teach each sentence as it occurs in the course of conversation. Should the student not understand the meaning of a given sentence, an appropriate explanation should be given him either by translating it or by paraphrasing it in simpler terms.

FORM OF WORK 17. REPRODUCTION OF PASSAGES.

It is sometimes necessary for people to memorize a succession of sentences, as we do when learning poetry, studying our part in a dramatic performance, or preparing the peroration of a speech. Occasionally it may be useful for the student of a foreign language to commit a whole passage to memory, in which case we should combine Conscious Oral Assimilation with the principles underlying Reproduction work.

Reproduction as a Stage in "Conventional Conversation."

As we shall see when examining the subsequent Forms of Work, the student will sometimes have to undergo a preliminary coaching or drilling in his replies to "Conventionalized" questions. If we ask even the really advanced student to give the long answer to the question group "What's the name of the thing we use when we write?" his response will probably lack in several respects. So we shall ask him to repeat several times after us:

[ðə 'neiməðə 'θiŋwi 'ju:zwenwi 'raitsə 'pen],
and then proceed to put the series of questions. Frequently recurring word-groups such as "we call him a . . ." "when I want to know . . ." "when I don't want somebody to . . ." should generally be rehearsed until the student has obtained the necessary mechanical mastery of the whole string of syllables.

Conventional Conversation.

This is the second division of those forms of work in which the student participates verbally in the conversation exercises. The term may be defined as "forms of dialogue between teacher and student arranged according to a systematical plan in order to bring about certain specific results." Conventional Conversation comprises all those forms of dialogue not coming under the heading "Normal Conversation" (*i.e.* conversation in the ordinary everyday sense of the term).

"Normal Conversation" can only be profitably employed with students who are already fairly proficient in the language, and who can converse without making more than an occasional mistake. It therefore follows that the majority of students requiring conversational lessons must confine their efforts to work of the "Conventional" type. A course of lessons in "Conventional Conversation" carried out systematically and intelligently will almost invariably cure even the worst cases of "pidgin speech," eradicate most of the bad linguistic habits and replace them by good ones. These types of work give the fullest opportunities for habit-forming, and ensure that mechanical mastery of the technique of the language which alone will result in real proficiency and the capacity for making unlimited progress.

Conventional conversation is easy and interesting work when the teacher is proficient in the technique of such work and when he has prepared sufficient conversational material. If he lacks such proficiency or has not prepared his material, he will constantly be at his wits' end as to how to proceed. A few series of desultory questions and halting answers, and the rest of the lesson will be an exhibition of pidgin-English or of boredom.

Conventional conversation is made up of a succession of units or items, each unit consisting generally of something said by the teacher and the appropriate response made by the pupil. When the units follow each other

in rapid and orderly succession the lesson is animated, interesting and valuable in quality and quantity. When there are breaks and interruptions, when the teacher pauses or loses the thread, or when the lesson is so badly graded that the responses are tardy or halting, the result is a dull and comparatively valueless lesson. The teacher must at all moments be ready with a constant supply of units, he must moreover be ready to modify the grading in two directions. Directly he sees that the responses are made with hesitation or haltingly he must make the work easier, he must "switch on a lower gear"; if, on the other hand, he suspects that interest is flagging on account of the units being too easy, he must increase the difficulty of the units, he must have recourse to a "higher gear." When the class consists of students of different degrees of proficiency, the teacher must be ready to make the units more difficult for the advanced members and easier for the less advanced.

In order to do this with success *and without fatigue* to himself, the teacher should be absolutely proficient in the technique of conventional conversation, he should be perfectly familiar with all the resources at his disposal; he should be able to recognize immediately and without effort all the different types of units and be ready to introduce each or any at the precise moment when it will be of value. The more he studies the classification of the units the more enthusiastic will he be in giving his lessons, and indeed comparatively few realize how interesting a supposedly dry subject may become when once its technique is familiar to us.

In the following pages we shall set forth and examine those many and varied forms of work coming under the heading "Conventional Conversation"; we shall have the opportunity of seeing the almost infinite wealth and variety of oral exercises at our disposal; we shall see the part played by each one in our complete programme of study; we shall note their interesting character and look forward to the moment when we shall use them in our actual lessons.

The units of which Conventional Conversation is made up may be classified in at least five different ways :

- (1) They may consist of :
 - (a) Questions and answers,
 - (b) Commands and answers,
 - (c) Completions of statements.
- (2) The Questions may be :
 - (a) of the " General " type,
 - (b) of the " Alternative " type,
 - (c) of the " Special " type.
- (3) The Questions may be :
 - (a) short,
 - (b) long (*or* augmented).
- (4) The Answers may be :
 - (a) laconic,
 - (b) short,
 - (c) long (*or* echo-like).
- (5) The Units may be :
 - (a) arranged in drill-like form,¹
 - (b) diversified¹.

1a. Questions and Answers :

What's that ?	It's the table.
What's a horse ?	It's an animal.
Is snow white ?	Yes, it is.

1b. Commands² and Answers :

Ask me for my book.	Let me have your book, please.
Tell me to stand up.	Stand up.

¹ On this last basis of classification we find a further series of sub-divisions, each of which will be examined later.

² Such commands as : Tell me what that is, Tell me what this chair's made of," etc., may be considered as Indirect Questions and come under heading 1a.

1c. Completions of Statements.

Iron is heavier than wood, therefore wood . .

Therefore wood is lighter than iron.

I wrote the letter, therefore the letter . . .

Therefore the letter was written by you.

This chair's made of . . . of . . . of . . .

It's made of wood.

2a. Questions of the "General" Type.

Such questions require mere affirmative or negative answers.

Is this a table ?

Yes, it is, *or* No, it isn't.

Is a horse an animal ?

Yes, it is.

Am I speaking English ?

Yes, you are.

Do you use a pen when you write ?

Yes, I do.

2b. Questions of the "Alternative" Type.

The answers to these are little more than repetitions of a portion of the question.

Is this a table or a chair ?

It's a table, *or* It's a chair

Is a horse an animal or a metal ?

It's an animal.

Am I speaking English or French ?

You're speaking English.

Do you use a pen or a knife

when you write ? I use a pen.

2c. Questions of the "Special" Type.

These contain an interrogative word, the answers containing one or more elements not heard in the question.

What's this ?

It's a table.

What's a horse ?

It's an animal.

What am I speaking ?

You're speaking English.

What do you use when you write ?

I use a pen.

Note that these three types of questions represent three degrees of difficulty. Should the student hesitate at a question of the Special type, the teacher may replace it by a question of one of the other two types.

3a Short Questions.

Questions which contain none but essential words.

What's this ?

What do we use when we write ?

Is it pleasant or unpleasant to lose a train ?

What can I do if I have a pen ?

What must you have when you write ?

3b. *Long (or Augmented) Questions.*

Unessential words are added in order to give the student additional practice in understanding long sentences or to give better opportunities to develop the student's capacity for unconscious assimilation.

Now I should like you to tell me what this is. (Indirect question.)

What's the name of the thing we're in the habit of using whenever we write a letter or a postcard ?

Is it generally considered to be a pleasant or an unpleasant thing to get to the station after the train has gone ?

What is it possible for me to do if I've got a pen or a pencil ?

What is it necessary for anyone to have if he wants to write a letter or postcard ?

4a. *Laconic Answers.*

Is this a table ?	Yes or No.
What's a horse ?	An animal.
What's the capital of England ?	London.
What do you use when you write ?	A pen.
What do you call a person who teaches ?	A teacher.
Is it right or wrong to say that London's the capital of France ?	It's wrong.

4b. *Short Answers (to the same questions).*

Yes, it is, or No, it isn't.
 It's an animal.
 London is.
 I use a pen.
 We call him a teacher.
 It's wrong to say that.

4c. *Long (or Echo-like) Answers (to the same questions).*

Yes, it's a table.
 Or No, it isn't a table ; it's a chair.
 A horse is an animal.
 London's the capital of England.
 When I write, I use a pen.
 We call a person who teaches—a teacher.
 It's wrong to say that London's the capital of France.

It will generally be found that the short answer is the one to be recommended. The Laconic form is useful for beginners and may be considered as the first

step from silent to non-silent work. The Echo-like answer is useful for inculcating habits of oral imitation or fluency.

5. As the fifth basis of classification of the units of conventional conversation necessitates still further sub- and cross-divisions, we shall adopt it in preference to the others in the catalogue of Forms of Work which follows.

Conventional Conversation in Form of Groups.

When a number of conversation-units similar in construction or dependent on each other are brought together and arranged in an appropriate order, such units form a *Group*.

When conventional conversation consists entirely of groups it is called drill-like; when not arranged in groups, it is called *diversified* or *non-drill-like*.

Examples of Groups or Drill-like Work.

What's a horse?—dog?—cat?—sheep?—cow? etc.
 What's a horse?—table?—hat?—door?—hand? etc.
 What's a table (—knife—shoe—bottle, etc.) made of?
 What can I do if I have a pen?—knife?—brush?—key? etc.
 What's the colour of snow?—coal?—blood?—grass? etc.
 Where's London?—Paris?—Rome?—Birmingham? etc.
 What's the contrary of "good"?—"large"?—"new"? etc.
 Ask me for my book.—pen.—knife.—pencil, etc.

Examples of Diversified Work.

What's a horse? What can I do if I have a pen? What's the colour of snow? Where's London? What's the contrary of "good"? Ask me for my book. What's a table? Where's Rome? Ask me for a penny stamp. What's a bottle generally made of? etc., etc.

Is this a book? Is it mine or yours? What's the colour of it? Is it thick or thin? Is it a French book or an English one? Where is it? Is it open or shut? What's the name of it? Who wrote it? How many pages are there in it? etc.

HOMOGENEOUS GROUPS AND SEQUENTIAL GROUPS.

Two entirely different types of groups may be used in Conventional Conversation of the Drill-like order : viz. *Homogeneous Groups* and *Sequential Groups*. These are not strictly speaking "Forms of Work" in the sense in which we are using the term, for many different "Forms of Work" may be used both in the shape of Homogeneous and of Sequential Groups. This is therefore a cross-division, and before proceeding further we should examine the nature and functions of each kind of group.

Homogeneous Groups.

These consist of a set of units (if possible not less than eight and not more than fifteen) of a certain type but differing in one or more details. Here is a characteristic example :

<i>Invariable part.</i>	<i>Variable part.</i>
What can I do if I have a	pen ?
	knife ?
	match ?
	key ?
	book ?
	piece of chalk ?
	brush ?
	piece of indiarubber ?

<i>Invariable part.</i>	<i>Variable part.</i>	<i>In- variable part.</i>	<i>Variable part.</i>
If I have a	pen,	I can	write.
	knife,		cut,
	match,		light the gas.
	key,		lock the door.
	book,		read.
	piece of chalk,		write on the blackboard.
	brush,		brush.

Each group constitutes therefore a "sentence mould" in which we may cast a number of separate sentences ; such groups are virtually Substitution Tables.¹ The great majority of the groups suggested in this book are

¹ See *Colloquial English* : 100 Substitution Tables, by the author of the present book. (W. Heffer & Sons Ltd.)

of this type; the reader will find abundant examples in the later pages and will note their great diversity and the possibility of gradation from the simplest to the most complex. They are generally used in the following way:

1. The teacher selects an appropriate group and reads it aloud once or several times to his pupils, giving both question and answer. He satisfies himself that all the words are understood, explaining (with or without recourse to translation) whatever may be necessary.

2. The teacher calls upon his pupils to repeat (in chorus or individually) three or four times the answer to the first question.¹

3. The teacher, after a final repetition of question and answer, asks the questions, and the pupils answer (either in chorus or individually).

(This third operation may be postponed to a subsequent lesson so as to provide an incubation period during which the group will "sink in".)

If the group is introduced at the right moment (in accordance with the principle of *Gradation*) the answers will be prompt, fluent and accurate.

The pupils, of course, should not resort to the artificial aid afforded by their having the printed or written groups before their eyes, but they may be allowed to study them at home provided that the necessary precautions have been taken to obviate a false pronunciation or other bad habits.

Each group should be repeated on many different occasions until it is perfectly assimilated. It will then be merged in the general mixture of all the previously assimilated groups and form part of the *Diversified Work* (which will be described later).

The further classification and description of Homogeneous Groups will be given under the headings of the Forms of Work to which they respectively belong.

¹ In certain cases however this preparatory exercise will already have been gone through in connection with Form of Work 15

Sequential Groups

These differ from Homogeneous Groups in this way: Instead of consisting of a set of from eight to fifteen units of one identical type, each group consists of from three to five different types of units in definite and logical sequence. Here are three characteristic examples:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Do you use a pen when you write ? | Yes, I <i>do</i> . |
| Do you use a knife when you write ? | No, I <i>don't</i> . |
| What do you use when you write ? | I use a <i>pen</i> . |
| Who uses a pen when you write ? | <i>I do</i> . |
| When do you use a pen ? | I use one <i>when I write</i> . |
| | |
| Do I give you lessons twice a week ? | Yes, you <i>do</i> . |
| Do I give you books twice a week ? | No, you <i>don't</i> . |
| What do I give you twice a week ? | You give me <i>lessons</i> . |
| Who gives you lessons twice a week ? | <i>You do</i> . |
| How often do I give you lessons ? | (You give them to me)
twice a week ¹ . |
| | |
| Is this box made of cardboard ? | Yes, it <i>is</i> . |
| Is it made of wood ? | No, it <i>isn't</i> . |
| What is it made of ? | It's made of <i>cardboard</i> . |
| What's made of cardboard ? | <i>That box is</i> . |

Now what do we particularly note in connection with these groups ?

1. That the first two questions are of the *General* type and that the remainder are of the *Special* type.
2. That the first question requires an affirmative answer.
3. That the second requires a negative answer.
4. That the third answer completes the second by correcting the false suggestion of the second question.
5. That the fourth question asks for the subject.
6. That the fifth question concerns any attendant circumstance.
7. That each answer stresses and brings into prominence a particular portion of the complete sentence of which the group constitutes the logical analysis.

¹ Augmented answer.

And these are indeed the essential features of all Sequential Groups.

Although much less useful and less elastic than groups of the Homogeneous type, the Sequential Group has advantages of its own and is more effective for certain pedagogical purposes than the former. The following appear to be the chief advantages of Sequential Groups:—

1. One of the things that every language student must acquire is proficiency in catching a new word and retaining it orally while the mind is partially occupied with something tending to distract the attention. Many sequential groups afford ideal opportunities for acquiring this habit. Take the third example. The student is shown a box and is asked "Is this box made of cardboard?" Now, according to the unalterable convention underlying this sort of work, the first answer *must* be in the affirmative. The word "cardboard" is new to him, but he answers without hesitation "Yes, it is," and even before so doing realizes the meaning of the word "cardboard," and that half a minute later he will have to use the word himself. In the intervening period during which part of his attention is occupied in answering the first question, listening to the second question, answering it, listening to the third question and preparing the answer, he is retaining mentally the word "cardboard," and at the right moment produces it.

2. Another thing that every language student must learn to do is to infer the meaning of a new word or construction assumptively and unquestioningly, to treat the new matter as if it were already familiar to him, and to make it really familiar by using the form himself at the earliest opportunity. The contrary attitude (viz. a morbid fear of the new and possibly incomprehensible) with the attendant impulse on the slightest pretext to burst out with "What does that mean?" (Qu'est ce que ça veut dire—Was heisst das,

etc., etc.) is fatal to real progress. The mechanism of the Sequential Group fosters the right attitude, renders much explanation or translation unnecessary (as in the case of the example quoted above) and makes for a proper mental discipline.

3. In a Sequential Group a given fact is considered from the three mutually complementary aspects of Affirmative, Interrogative and Negative. This is in itself a sound procedure, but when we consider, in addition, how often these logical aspects are bound up with grammatical complexity, we appreciate still more the value of the series of questions and answers which bring each of them into successive prominence.

4. Further we note that the student's attention is concentrated first on one, and, a moment later, on another, then on a third, part of a fundamental sentence, and that thus his capacity for "thinking in the language" (to use this somewhat timeworn figure of speech) is developed. In this respect it is interesting to compare a given sequential group with equivalent groups in several foreign languages.

5. The rhythmic effect of a Sequential group has a certain value and aids very considerably in ensuring retention. If we read aloud the three examples given above we notice the constantly recurring cadence and the harmonious regularity of the intonation curves.

Unless these groups are used with the units appearing in regular and rapid succession, always in the same order, this type of exercise will fall out of the category of Drill-like work and will belong to the *Diversified* type.

"Ostensive" and "Contextual" Work.

When the teacher bases his sentences on objects, persons and conditions actually present, the type of work is called "Ostensive." When the sentences cannot be illustrated by such methods of material or immediate association, the type of work is called "Contextual."

Examples of Ostensive Work.

What's that ? (pointing to the table).	It's the table.
What's that ? (pointing to the picture of a tree).	It's a tree.
What's this made of ? (pointing to or showing an object).	It's made of wood.
What's the colour of that ? (pointing out or showing).	It's green.
Is this pencil long or short ?	It's long.
What am I doing ?	You're writing.
What have I just done ?	You've just taken a book.
What am I writing with ?	You're writing with a pencil.

Examples of Contextual Work.

What's a horse ?	It's an animal.
What's a bicycle made of ?	It's made of steel.
What's the colour of snow ?	It's white.
Is a mountain high or low ?	It's high.
What's the capital of England ?	London (is).
What do I use when I write ?	When you write, you use a pen or a pencil.
What do you say when you want somebody to come in ?	I say " come in."
Would you rather be well or ill ?	I'd rather be well.

Questions of the *ostensive* type require some sort of gesture on the part of the teacher ; he must " show " something. The words contained in questions of the *contextual* type are generally understood by the context. To understand how important this distinction is we may note :

(a) That ostensive work requires apparatus (a large number of objects), whereas contextual work can be equally well performed without any apparatus at all.

(b) That ostensive work may be carried out without any form of translation, whereas contextual work (especially in the early stages) often necessitates the use of the student's mother tongue.

(c) That ostensive work is relatively limited, whereas contextual work is absolutely unlimited in its scope.

GROUPS OF UNITS OF THE OSTENSIVE TYPE.

In the description of Forms of Work 4 to 9 we sketched out a number of groups specially suitable for conscious Oral Assimilation. In connection with Form of Work 15 we noted that in due course the students would be called upon to repeat those same groups in imitation of the teacher. Those two operations will have prepared the students for the form of work now under consideration, in which those same groups will figure in our Conventional Conversation.

FORM OF WORK 18. NOUN GROUPS. (In the form of Homogeneous Groups of Special Questions.)

What's this ?	It's a book.—pen.—pencil.—knife, etc.
What's that ?	It's the door.—window.—ceiling. etc.
Whose book (—pen—head—hat—coat, etc.) is this ?	It's yours.—mine, etc.
Which book (etc.) is this ?	It's the red. (—black—large, etc.) one.
What have I got ?	You've got a book.—pen.—pencil, etc.
What am I touching ?	You're touching the table.—chair.—wall, etc.
What am I taking—looking at—picking up, etc. ?	You're taking (etc.) the book, etc.
What's this made of ?	It's made of wood.—glass.—iron.—leather, etc.

The above groups may be multiplied, developed and varied in the different manners described in the previous pages.

Examples of Variants.

General Questions instead of Special Questions. (This constitutes the easiest and most elementary form of conversation.)

Is this a book ?—pen ?—pencil ? etc.

Is this my book ?—pen ? etc.

Is this book (etc.) red ?—black ? etc.

Is this the red (etc.) book (etc.) ?

Laconic answer to above Yes, *or* No.

Short answer to above : Yes, it is, *or* No, it isn't.

[illegible]

Am I touching the book (etc.)? { Yes, *or* No.
Yes, you are, *or* No, you're not.

Alternative Questions.

Is this a book or a pen ? etc. It's a pen, etc.

Augmented Questions.

I want you to tell me { whether this is a book, etc.
what this is, etc.

Sequential Groups.

Is this a book? Yes, it is.

Is this a pencil ? No, it isn't.

What is it?
etc.

etc.

FORM OF WORK 19. QUALIFICATIVE GROUPS. (In form of Homogeneous Groups.)

What colour's this ? } It's black,—
What's the colour of this book ?—paper ? etc. } white.—red,
etc.

What's the colour of this book?—paper? etc. } its black,
white.—red,
etc.

As there is no satisfactory *Special Question* in English (and probably some other languages) for eliciting replies such as "It's large.—small.—wide.—high.—light," etc., such subjects will have to be treated by means of General or Alternative Questions:

Is this book (—box, etc.) large?—small?—wide?—heavy?
etc.

Is this book (—box, etc.) large or small?—wide or narrow?—heavy or light? etc.

Is this a large (etc.) book (etc.)?

Is this a large book (—box, etc.) or a small one? etc.

In connection with adjective groups the box of miscellaneous objects will be of great use. (See footnote, page 48.)

Examples of Variants.

Augmented Questions.

I want you to tell me (Will you tell me—I want to know, etc.) what colour this is,—whether this is large or small.—whether the ceiling is high or low.—whether this penny is round or square, etc.

Sequential Groups.

Is this book black ?	Yes, it is.
Is this book white ?	No, it isn't.
What's the colour of this book ?	It's black.
What's black ?	That book is.
Is this penny round ?	Yes, it is.
Is it square ?	No, it isn't.
What's the shape of it ?	It's round.
What's round ?	That penny is.

FORM OF WORK 20. DETERMINATIVE GROUPS. (In form of Homogeneous Groups of Special Questions.)

Whose book (etc.) is this ?	It's your (—my—his—her—John's, etc.) book. It's mine—yours—his—hers—John's, etc.
How many books (—matches—chairs, etc.) are there here ?—can you see ?—have I got ? etc.	There are (—I can see—You've got, etc.) two.—three.—four, etc.
Here's a row of books (—matches etc.) Which one is this ?	It's the first.—second.—third, etc.

*Examples of Variants.**General Questions.*

Is this my (—your—his—John's, etc.) book (etc.) ?	Yes, it is, <i>or</i> No, it isn't.
Can you see two (—three, etc.) books (etc.) ?	Yes, I can, <i>or</i> No, I can't.

Alternative Questions.

Is this my book or yours ? etc.	It's mine, etc.
Have I got one match or two ? etc.	You've got two, etc.
Is this the first or the second chair ? etc.	It's the first, etc.

Augmented Questions.

Will you tell me (—I want to know—I'm going to ask you, etc.) whose book this is.—how many matches you can see, etc.—whether this is the first or the second chair, etc.

Sequential Groups.

Is this my book ?	Yes, it is.
Is it yours ?	No, it isn't
Whose book is it ?	It's yours. (<i>or</i> It's your book).
Have I got three books ?	Yes, you have.
Have I got four books ?	No, you haven't.
How many books have I got ?	You've got three.
Who's got three books ?	You have.

FORM OF WORK 21. VERB GROUPS. (In form of Homogeneous Groups of Special Questions.)

Where am I going ? You're going to the door—window, etc.
 What am I taking ? You're taking the book.—box, etc.
 Where am I standing ? You're standing there—at the window
 —near the fireplace, etc.
 What am I looking at ? You're looking at the ceiling.—door.
 etc.

Etc., etc. See Form of Work 7.

Variation for Persons.

Go to the door ! Where are you going ? I'm going to the door.
 Take your book ! What are you taking ? I'm taking my book.
 Where is he going ? He's going to the door.
 What's he taking ? He's taking his book.
 Etc., etc.

Variation for Tense, etc.

What have I (just) taken ?— You've (just) taken, etc., your
 touched ?—opened ?—shut ? book.—the box.—etc.
 etc.
 What have I (just) done ? You've (just) gone to the door,
 etc.
 What am I (just) going to do ? You're (just) going to take my
 etc. book, etc.
 What did I do just now ? You took the book, etc.
 What was I doing when I was at You were taking some matches
 the table ? out of the box, etc.

*Variants of Questions in Group Form.**General Questions.*

Am I taking the book ? etc.
 Have I (just) taken the book ? etc.
 Did I take the book just now ? etc.
 Are you taking the book ? etc.
 Is he going to the door ? etc.

Alternative Questions.

Am I going to the door or to the window ? etc.
 Am I taking my book or yours ? etc.
 Am I reading or writing ?—pushing or pulling the chair ?—
 opening the door or shutting it ? etc.

All the foregoing questions can be augmented in the usual way.

Sequential Groups.

Am I writing?	Yes, you are.
Am I reading?	No, you're not.
What am I doing?	You're writing.
Who's writing?	<i>You</i> are.

Are you touching the table ?	Yes, I am.
Are you touching the floor ?	No, I'm not.
What are you doing ? (or touching ?)	I'm touching the table.
Who's touching the table ?	I am.

Etc., etc.

FORM OF WORK 22. PLACE GROUPS.

Where's the book ?— box ?—pencil ? etc.	It's on the table.—chair.—floor, etc.
Where's the match ?	It's on (—in—over—under—in front of etc.) the box, etc.
Where am I sitting ?	You're sitting on the chair.—on the table.—near the window.—in the corner, etc.

Etc. See Form of Work 8.

Sequential Variants.

Is the book on the table ?	Yes, it is.
Is the book on the chair ?	No, it isn't.
Where's the book ?	It's on the table.
What's on the table ?	The book is.

Is the pencil on the chair ?	Yes, it is.
Is the pencil on the floor ?	No, it isn't.
Where's the pencil ?	It's on the chair.
What's on the chair ?	The pencil is.

Is the paper on the floor ?	Yes, it is.
Is the paper on the table ?	No, it isn't.
Where's the paper ?	It's on the floor.
What's on the floor ?	The paper is.

Other variants as before.

FORM OF WORK 23. GROUPS TREATING SPECIFIC
POINTS OF GRAMMAR, ETC.

Many points of grammar and syntax are treated incidentally in the teaching of the preceding groups, but

when necessary, special exercises may be devised to treat specifically the various difficulties or problems connected with sentence structure or inflexions.

Singular and Plural.

What's that and what are those ?	That's a window and those are windows, etc.
What's this and what are these ?	This is a book and these are books, etc.
What have I just taken ?	You've taken some books.—matches, etc.
Are those windows ?	Yes, they are.
Are those doors ?	No, they're not.
What are they ?	They're windows.

Other variants as usual.

German Case.

Many exercises in question-and-answer form may be devised on the basis of the groups given on pages 48-54.

Examples.

Was ist das ?	Das ist der Bleistift—der Stuhl, etc.
Was nehme (—sehe, etc.) ich ?	Sie nehmen (etc.) den Bleistift—den Stuhl, etc.
Wohin lege ich den Bleistift ? etc.	Sie legen den Bleistift (etc.) auf den Tisch, etc.
Wo liegt der Bleistift ? etc.	Er liegt auf dem Tisch(e), etc.

The last example developed in a Sequential Group.

Liegt der Bleistift auf dem Tisch(e) ?	Ja, er liegt darauf.
Liegt der Bleistift auf der Karte ?	Nein, er liegt nicht darauf.
Wo liegt der Bleistift ?	Er liegt auf dem Tisch(e).
Was liegt auf dem Tisch(e) ?	Der Bleistift.

French Tenses.

Qu'est ce que je ferai ?	Vous prendrez le livre.
Qu'est ce que je fais ?	Vous prenez le livre.
Qu'est ce que j'ai fait ?	Vous avez pris le livre.

Agreement of French Past Participle. (Sequential Group.)

Est-ce que j'ai pris la lettre ?	Oui, vous l'avez prise.
Est-ce que j'ai pris le livre ?	Non, vous ne l'avez pas pris.
Qu'est-ce que j'ai fait ?	Vous avez pris la lettre.
Qui est-ce qui l'a prise ?	C'est vous.

In all the foregoing examples we have based our groups on objects before the eye, on actions which are performed and on conditions actually present in the classroom. As we have pointed out, more than once, associations of this ostensive type are more effective than those which depend on a more abstract context. But, as may easily be imagined, the possibilities of ostensive work are limited, before long we must have recourse to the unlimited scope afforded by the more abstract or contextual work, that is to say, to conversational units not suggested by the actual environment of the teacher and his pupils.

Groups of Units of the Contextual Type.

The second of the two main divisions of Drill-like Conventional Conversation consists of exercises of the Contextual type, *i.e.* exercises in which little or no reference is made to the immediate environment of the teacher and his pupil. Whereas for work of the first type a considerable amount of apparatus and of physical activity is required, the type about to be described requires neither objects nor actions; the groups pertaining to it could be used just as effectively by blind persons or by people sitting in a bare room.

If the ostensive type necessitates the presence of concrete objects and the performance of actions which are the subjects of conversation, the latter type requires an enormous quantity of written or printed notes to serve as reference matter for the teacher. These he must collect and draw up in advance. One of the objects of the present work is to set forth (for the benefit of teachers) a summary of the material collected and used by the author for the last twenty years. During this long period he has made a note of every word or expression likely to be of utility in this connection, and has endeavoured to fit each one into its proper place. The complete list with all possible variants would be of encyclopædic proportions; at present,

therefore, only the most typical examples in each form of work can be given ; the reader will have no difficulty in expanding and developing them according to his requirements, *i.e.* the requirements of his pupils.

Although most of the examples are given in English, it does not necessarily follow that each one is ideally suitable for a course in Spoken English. Many groups which sound somewhat formal and stilted as they stand may, however, prove eminently suitable for oral work when used in connection with the teaching of other languages.

A particularly vital point now requires consideration. In most of the forms of work examined hitherto the presence of the objects and the performance of the actions we are speaking about enable the students to grasp the meaning of the units of conversation. In the absence of possibilities of such immediate association, what steps can we take to ascertain whether the units are understood by the student, and to render those intelligible which are not immediately understood ?

The first and most obvious method is to translate the unit (or the unknown portion of it) into the language of the student. This can be done casually during the preliminary enunciation of the group ; in the case of an English student of French, the teacher in using group 3 of Form of Work 24, might proceed as follows :

Qu'est-ce que le cheval ? (What's the horse—or as we should say in English : What's *a* horse.) C'est un animal. (Vous comprenez ça.) Qu'est-ce que le chien ? (dog). C'est un animal. Qu'est-ce que le chat ? (cat). Qu'est-ce que le lion ? (Vous comprenez ça sans doute). C'est un animal. Qu'est-ce que la souris ? (mouse), etc.

Should the teacher be ignorant of his pupil's language, it may be possible to use a third language as a key. Thus, in the case of an English teacher acquainted with French teaching English to a Spaniard also acquainted with French the vehicular language would be French.

In a class consisting of adults we may occasionally

call upon a more advanced student to act as interpreter. ("Do you all understand what that sentence means? No? Not all? *You* know what it means, Mr. X., don't you? Would you mind telling the others?")

Another plan is to prepare a list of such words as are likely to be unknown, to hand the list to the student asking him to look them up in his dictionary, and to bring his notes with him to his next lesson.

Recourse to translation may often be necessary in the case of beginners, but with students taking a corrective or an advanced course it is rarely necessary. Unfamiliar words can generally be explained without difficulty by definition, synonym or context ("*Clouds*? Oh those things you see in the sky when it rains. Are they grey or blue?"—" *Busy*? That means when you have a lot of work to do, when you're not free. I'm busy now, busy giving you a lesson."—" Frequently? Oh that's the same thing as *often*; I *frequently* see you, I *often* see you.")

If the number of unfamiliar words or constructions in any lesson is disproportionately large, it generally points to a bad grading of the course, it means that the work is of too advanced a type. In such cases it is for the teacher to modify his programme and use more elementary forms of work. Sometimes, however, it will be found that the student is giving way to a vicious tendency known as "exaggerated bilingualism"; he fancies it is his duty to translate mentally everything he hears or to refrain from using any foreign word until he has found what he imagines to be its equivalent in his native tongue. The remedy is a course of exercises in Unconscious Assimilation and similar forms of work.

There are four main divisions of the Forms of Work coming under the heading: Groups of the Contextual Type.

(a) Those referring to general subjects of common knowledge

(b) Alternative Question Groups.

(c) Those involving mere conversion (*i.e.* repetition of the question with modifications).

(d) Those referring to the structure of the language studied.

I. GENERAL SUBJECTS.

NOUN GROUPS.¹

(Groups of units in which the answers contain nouns as the most prominent words.)

FORM OF WORK 24. NOUN GROUPS. VARIETY 1. CONVENTIONAL DEFINITIONS.²

<i>Group</i> 1.—What's London ?—Birmingham — Glasgow ? — Paris ? etc. ³	It's a town.
<i>Group</i> 2.—What's England ? — France ?—Germany ?—the United States ? etc.	It's a country.
<i>Group</i> 3.—What's a horse ?—cat ?— dog ?—lion ? etc.	It's an animal.
<i>Group</i> 4.—What's a table ?—chair ? —bed ? etc.	It's a piece of furniture.

¹ The composer of the actual course must discriminate between the more useful and less useful groups. Some of the nouns used here are included in the lists of the 500 most useful words ; others are far outside the radius of the 2500 most useful words. To teach such words as *trout*, *elm*, *blackbird*, *file*, *Norfolk*, at a time when the student's vocabulary is practically non-existent would be a serious violation of the Principle of Proportion.

² These need not be definitions in the exact sense of the term, for the object of the exercises described in this book is not to teach geography, physics, logic, or any other specific science, but to train people in the art of using spoken language. Thus in Conventional Conversation the answer to the question : " What's Birmingham ? " is " It's a town " ; if the same question cropped up in Normal Conversation, the answer might be : " Birmingham ? Why, it's a large industrial town in the West Midland district of England on the borders of Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Worcestershire, etc., etc." A circle, a triangle, etc., may be defined conventionally as " Shapes," whereas if the exact definitions were required, it would mean converting the language lesson into a geometry lesson.

- Group 5.*—What's iron ? — steel ? — copper ?—brass ? etc. It's a metal.
- Group 6.*—What's a ceiling ?—floor ? —wall ?—door ? etc. It's a part of the room.
- Group 7.*—What's the head ?—an arm ?—the neck ? etc. It's a part of the body.
- Group 8.*—What's a hat ?—coat ?—shoe ?—glove ? etc. { It's something to wear.
{ It's something we wear.
- Group 9.*—What's a house ?—church ? —theatre ? etc. It's a building.
- Group 10.*—What's an apple ?—a pear ?—a cherry ? etc. It's a fruit.
- Group 11.*—What's a potato ?—a carrot ?—a cabbage ? etc. It's a vegetable
- Group 12.*—What's beef ?—mutton ? —veal ? etc. It's a kind of meat.
- Group 13.*—What's bread ?—an egg ? —meat ?—cheese ? etc. { It's something to eat.
{ It's something we eat.
- Group 14.*—What's tea ?—beer ?—wine ?—coffee ? etc. { It's something to drink.
{ It's something we drink.
- Group 15.*—What's Sunday ?—Monday ? etc. It's a day of the week.
- Group 16.*—What's January ?—February ? etc. It's a month.
- Group 17.*—What's Spring ?—Summer ? etc. It's a season.
- Group 18.*—What's a sparrow ?—a thrush ?—an ostrich ? etc. It's a bird.
- Group 19.*—What's a trout ?—a plaice ?—a mackerel ? etc. It's a fish.
- Group 20.*—What's a bee ?—wasp ?—fly ?—black beetle ? etc. It's an insect.
- Group 21.*—What's a rose ?—violet ? —tulip ?—primrose ? etc. It's a flower.
- Group 22.*—What's an oak ?—an elm ? —a pine ? etc. It's a tree.
- Group 23.*—What's a piano ?—violin ? —flute ? etc. It's a musical instrument.
- Group 24.*—What's a hammer ?—saw ?—file ? etc. It's a tool.

- Group 25.*—What's blue?—red?—green? etc. It's a colour.
- Group 26.*—What's the Thames?—the Nile?—the Rhine? etc. It's a river.
- Group 27.*—What's Yorkshire?—Kent?—Norfolk? etc. It's a county.
- Group 28.*—What's a circle?—a triangle?—an oval? etc. It's a shape.
- Group 29.*—What's astronomy?—physics?—mathematics? etc. It's a science.

Many of the above groups are given for reference purposes, they are useful in certain cases and less useful in others; much depends on the requirements and deficiencies of the student and the exact purpose for which the lessons are given. These groups, if necessary, may be supplemented by others composed by the teacher himself, but groups of this sort should never contain less than four units. All groups involving stilted or technical language should be avoided. *Ex.:* It's a domestic utensil. It's a subdivision of the Tertiary rocks! etc.

Variants.

Plural.—What are horses?—dogs?—cats? etc. They're animals.

General Questions.

Is the horse an animal?

Is the table a piece of furniture? etc.

Alternative Questions.

Is the horse an animal or a metal? etc.

Augmented Questions.

Can you tell me (—I want you to tell me—I want to know, etc. what London is?

Examples of Developed answers.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| What's England? | It's a European country. |
| | It's a country in Europe. |
| What's mutton? | It's a kind (—sort) of meat. |
| | It's the flesh of the sheep. |
| What's February? | It's the shortest month of the year. |
| What's a hammer? | It's a tool used for knocking in nails. |

Sequential Groups.

Is a horse an animal ? Yes, it is.
 Is a horse a metal ? No, it isn't.
 What's a horse ? It's an animal.

Or

Is a horse an animal ? Yes, it is.
 Is it a metal ? No, it isn't.
 What is it, then ? It's an animal.

FORM OF WORK 25. NOUN GROUPS. VARIETY 2.
 (Units other than conventional definitions.)

Group 30.—What do we call a person (a man — anyone — anybody) who teaches ? — writes ? — sings ? — sings well ? — manufactures ? — manufactures biscuits ? — sells meat ? etc., etc. We call him a teacher. — writer. — singer. — good singer. — manufacturer. — biscuit manufacturer. — butcher.

Complementary Groups : 65 and 66.

Group 31.—What's the capital of England ?—France ? etc. London (is)
Group 32.—What day comes after (— before) Monday ? etc. }
Group 33.—What day comes between Monday and Wednesday ? etc. } Tuesday (does), etc.
Group 34.—What month comes after (—before) February ? etc. January (does).
Group 35.—What month comes between March and May ? etc. April (does), etc.
Group 36.—Where's London ?—New York ? — Glasgow ? — Cologne ? — France ?—Egypt ?—Japan ? etc. It's in England.—the United States. — Scotland. — Germany. — Europe. — Africa.—Asia, etc.
Group 37.—Where do people speak English ?—French ? etc. They speak it in England.—France., etc.
Group 38.—What's a table (—bottle—key — knife — window — door — bicycle — boot — hat, etc.), (generally — always — usually, etc.) made of ? It's (generally, etc.) made of wood, — glass, — iron, — steel, — wood and glass, — wood, — steel, — leather, — felt or straw,—etc.

Variant.

What are (most) tables (etc.) made of? They're made of wood.

Group 39.—What must you have when you write?—light the gas? — pay? — brush? — brush your hair?—lock the door?—write on the black-board?—make a parcel?—wash?—blot a letter?—smoke?—knock in nails?—sew?—saw?—shave?—rub something out?—stick things tog ther?—pull out a cork? — drive in a screw? — paint? etc.

When I write (etc.) I must have a pen.—a match.—money.—a brush.—a hair-brush.—a key.—a piece of chalk.—some paper and string.—some soap and water.—some blotting paper. — some tobacco.—a hammer.—a needle and cotton.—a saw.—a razor.—a piece of indiarubber. — some gum, glue or paste.—a corkscrew. — a screw-driver.—a paintbrush., etc.

The above group has a large number of variants :

What are you obliged to have —are you bound to have

What must you (—generally—always—) use —take

What must most people

. . . when you want to write? . . . whenever you write? . . . in order to write?

What would you use (etc.) if you wrote?—if you wanted to write?—if you were to write?

What would you have to have if you were going to write?

What would it be necessary for you to have if

What must I have when I write?

What must we have when we write? etc.

Complementary Groups : 67 and Variants.

Group 40.—What do we write with? We write with a pen, etc.
—light the gas with? etc.

Variant.

What do we call the thing we write with?

Group 41.—What's the name of the thing we use when we write? etc. The name of the thing we use when we write's a pen, etc.

Variants as above.

Group 42.—What do we call (what's the name of) the first (—second, etc.) month (of the year)?—day of the week?

We call it (It's) January, etc.—Sunday, etc.

Complementary Groups : 62, 63.

- Group 43.**—What language do people speak when they are in (—go to) England?—France? etc. When they are in (—go to) England (etc.) they speak English, etc.

Complementary Group 70.

- Group 44.**—What does a country (—a town—a street—a bookcase—a cigarette—the alphabet—a dictionary—a sentence—a word—the sea—a book—a coat—a house—a forest—a matchbox—a glass of beer—a cup of tea—a room—an inkpot—a purse—a train—a stove—a letter box—a glass of wine—a garden—a wood, etc., etc.) contain? It contains towns, — streets, — houses, — books, — tobacco, — letters, — words, — words, — letters, — water, — pages, — pockets, — rooms, — trees, — matches, — beer, — tea, — furniture, — ink, — money, — passengers, — a fire, — letters, — wine, — flowers, — trees, etc.

- Group 45.**—Where do we (generally) find trees?—books?—shells?—mud?—grass? — soot? — flowers? etc., etc. We (generally) find them in woods, etc.

- Group 46.**—What's the sky covered with when it rains? It's covered with clouds
What's the water covered with when it's very cold? —ice.—snow.
What's the ground covered with when it snows? —feathers. — fur.— skin.— hair.
What's a bird covered with?
What's a cat covered with?
What's a sheep covered with?
What's the human body covered with?
What's the head covered with?
What are the streets covered with in summer?—winter? They're covered with dust.—mud, etc.

- Group 47.**—What do you put on when you go out?—take off when you come in?—wipe when you come in?—give when you receive money?—carry when it rains?—get at the booking office when you travel by train?—make when the room's too cold?—open when the room's too warm? When I go out I put on my hat. When I come in I take off my hat. When I come in I wipe my shoes. When I receive money I give a receipt, etc.

Complementary Group : 71

Group 48.—Where do you go when you want to buy something?—buy bread?—buy meat?—buy coffee?—buy vegetables?—buy fish?—buy a hat?—get a new suit?—get a new dress?—get some medicine?—get shaved?—get your hair cut?—get something printed?—have a tooth out?—buy some stamps?—travel by train?—see a play?—hear music?—buy a pair of boots?—learn music?—learn a foreign language?—buy some envelopes? etc.

When I want to buy something (etc.) I go to a shop.—the baker's.—the butcher's.—the grocer's.—the green-grocer's.—fishmonger's.—the hatter's (or the milliner's).—the tailor's.—the dress-maker's.—the chemist's.—the hairdresser's (or barber's).—the printer's.—the dentist's.—the post office.—the station.—the theatre.—a concert.—a bootshop.—a music teacher.—a language teacher.—the stationer's, etc.

Complementary Group : 72.

Variants similar to those of Group 39.

In addition to the variants already suggested, an infinite number of variations is possible in connection with all the noun groups: longer or shorter questions or answers, general or alternative questions, and sequential instead of homogeneous groups.

FORM OF WORK 26. QUALIFICATIVE GROUPS.

Group 49.—What's the colour of the sky? — chalk? — coal? — blood?—snow?—a tree?—the sea? — milk? — grass? — a lemon?—a cigar?—an elephant?—mustard? etc.

It's blue.—white.—black.—red.—white.—green.—blue.—white.—green.—yellow.—brown.—grey.—yellow, etc.

With the above exceptions (for reasons given on page 76) qualificative groups are best composed in the form of General or Alternative questions:

Is snow white or black? Is a penny round or square? Is a stone hard or soft? Is silk rough or smooth? Is the sky blue or red? Is a mountain high or low? Is English difficult or

easy? Is lead heavy or light? Is fire hot or cold? Is grass green or blue? Is ice hot or cold? Is a plate round or square? Is the rose beautiful or ugly? Is the sea deep or shallow? Is a lemon black or yellow? Is iron useful or useless? Is a walking-stick long or short? Is a razor sharp or blunt? Is milk white or black? Is a pig clean or dirty? Is water necessary or unnecessary? Is this question difficult or easy? Is coal white or black? Is a needle blunt or sharp? Is a cigar brown or blue? Is salt bitter or sweet? Is a mouse large or small? Is a tree green or blue? Is sugar sweet or bitter? Is a file rough or smooth? Etc., etc.

Variants

General questions instead of Alternative.

Plural instead of singular.

Augmented questions.

(But not Sequential groups.)

Group 50.—Is English a difficult language or an easy one? Is lead a heavy metal or a light one? Is ice a cold substance or a hot one? Is the rose a beautiful flower or an ugly one? Is iron a useless metal or a useful one? Is a pig a dirty animal or a clean one? Is this a difficult question or an easy one? Is a mouse a large animal or a small one? Is the elephant a large animal or a small one? Is a millionaire a rich man or a poor one? Is iron a hard metal or a soft one? Is English a dead language or a living language? Is Latin a dead language or a living language?

Variants as above.

FORM OF WORK 27. DETERMINATIVE AND PRONOUN GROUPS.

Group 51.—Who generally uses your (—my — Mr. A.'s — Mrs. A.'s —) pen, etc.?

I do. You do. He does. She does.

Who generally use our (—your—your friend's—) pens? etc.

We do. You do. They do.

Variant Answers.

I do myself. You do yourself. I use it myself. You use it yourself, etc.

Group 52.—If anybody gives you (—me — Mr. A. — Mrs. A. — us — you — your friends) something, who receives it?

I do. You do. He does, etc.

Group 53.—Who(m) are your (—my—
Mr. A.'s — Mrs. A.'s — our — your
—your friend's) letters addressed
to ? They're addressed to
me.—you.—him, etc.

Group 54.—If you (—I, etc.) write a
letter, who's the letter written by ? It's written by me.—
you.— etc.

Group 55.—
Whose hat do I wear ? I wear mine.
Whose hat do you wear ? You wear yours.
Whose hat does Mr. A. wear ? He wears his.
Whose hat does Mrs. A. wear ? She wears hers.
Whose hats do we wear ? We wear ours.
Whose hats do you wear ? You wear yours.
Whose hats do your friends wear ? They wear theirs.
Whose book have I got ?—am I You've got (etc.)
reading ? etc. yours.
Whose pen am I using ? etc., etc.

Variant Answers.

I wear my hat. I wear my own. I wear my own hat.

Group 56.—What do two and two (—two
and three, etc.) make ? They make four.—
five, etc.

How many arms (—fingers — eyes —
noses — ears — heads — hands, etc.)
have you got ? I've got two.—ten,
etc.

How many pockets have you got in your
coat ? I've got . . .

How many buttons have you got on
your coat ? I've got . . .

How many keys have you got in your
pocket ? etc. I've got . . .

Group 57.—How many chairs (—people—
tables — windows — doors — corners,
etc.) are there in this room ?

There are . . .

Group 58.—How many chairs, etc., does
this room contain ?

It contains . . .

Group 59.—How many are there in a pair ?
—a dozen ?—half a dozen ?—two
dozen, etc.

There are two, etc.

Group 60.—How many seconds are there
in a minute ? (minutes in an hour ?—
hours in a day ?—days in a week ?—
days in a month ?—days in a year ?—
weeks in a month ?—weeks in a year ?
—months in a year ?)

There are sixty, etc.

Variants.

How many seconds does a minute contain ? etc. It contains sixty, etc.

How many seconds does a minute consist of ? etc. It consists of sixty, etc.

Group 61.—

What number comes before three ? Two (does).

What number comes after three ? Four (does).

What number comes between five and seven ? Six (does).

*Group 62.—*Which month of the year is January ?—February ? etc. It's the first, etc.

Complementary Group : 42.

*Group 63.—*Which day of the week is Sunday ?—Monday ? etc. It's the first, etc.

*Group 64.—*What comes between the first and the third ? etc. The second (does), etc.

What comes before the sixth ? etc. The fifth (does), etc.

What comes after the sixth ? etc. The seventh (does), etc.

Variants as usual.

FORM OF WORK 28. VERB GROUPS.

*Group 65.—*What does a teacher (—writer — singer — good singer — manufacturer — biscuit manufacturer — butcher — reader — player — builder — buyer—proof corrector, etc., etc.) do ? He teaches. — writes. — sings. — sings well. — manufactures. — manufactures biscuits. — sells meat. — reads. — plays. — builds. — buys. — corrects proofs, etc.

Variant.

What do teachers (—writers—singers, etc.) do ? They teach.—write.—sing, etc.

*Group 66.—*What's a teacher ?—writer ?—singer ? etc. It's a person who teaches, etc.

Complementary Groups to 65 and 66 : 30.

Variant Answers.

It's one (—someone—somebody) who teaches.

Variant

What are teachers?—writers?—singers? etc. They're people who teach, etc.

Group 67.—When must I (—we—you, etc.) have a pen?—a match?—money?—a brush?—a hairbrush?—a key?—a piece of chalk?—some paper and string?—some soap and water?—some blotting paper?—some tobacco?—a hammer?—a needle and cotton?—a saw?—a razor?—a piece of india-rubber?—some gum, glue or paste?—a corkscrew?—a screw-driver?—a paintbrush? etc. I (etc.) must have one when I (etc.) write.—light the gas.—pay.—brush.—brush my (etc.) hair.—lock the door.—write on the blackboard.—make a parcel.—wash.—blot a letter.—smoke.—knock in a nail.—sew.—saw.—shave.—rub something out.—stick things together.—pull out a cork.—drive in a crew—paint, etc.

Variants.

When am I (—are we—are you, etc.) obliged to have a pen? etc.

When must I (etc.) (generally, etc.) use (—take, etc.) a pen? etc.

When must most people (—people—a man, etc.) have a pen? etc.

What should I (—would you, etc.) have to use (etc.) if I wrote (—wanted to write—were to write? etc.).

What would it be necessary for me (etc.) to have if I wrote? wanted to write?—were to write? etc.

Complementary Groups to above : 39 and Variants.

What do we do with a pen? etc., etc. We write with it.

What can I (—you, etc.) do with a pen? etc., etc. I (etc.) can write with it.

What can I (—you, etc.) do if I (etc.) have a pen? etc., etc. If I (etc.) have a pen (etc.), I can write.

Complementary Group : 40.

What's a pen used for?

It's used for writing.

FORM OF WORK 29. MISCELLANEOUS GROUPS (including Verbs, Nouns, Adjectives, Adverbs, Phrases, and Clauses).

Group 68.—What do I say when somebody gives me something?—I ask somebody to do something?—I meet somebody?—I meet somebody in the morning?—I meet somebody in the afternoon?—I meet somebody in the evening?—I go to bed?—I go away?—I want somebody to repeat something? etc.

When somebody gives me something (etc.), I say "thank you."—please.—how are you?—"good morning."—good afternoon.—"good evening."—"good night."—"good-bye."—I beg your pardon," etc.

Complementary Group : 69.

Group 69.—When do I say "thank you"?—"please"?—"how are you"?—"good morning"?—"good afternoon"?—"good evening"?—"good night"?—"good bye"?—"I beg your pardon"? etc.

I say "thank you" (etc.) when somebody gives me something.—I ask somebody to do something.—I meet somebody.—I meet somebody in the morning.—I meet somebody in the afternoon.—I meet somebody in the evening.—I go to bed.—I go away.—I want somebody to repeat something, etc.

Complementary Group : 68.

Group 70.—When do people speak English?—French? etc.

They speak English(—French-etc.) when they go to (—are in) England.—France, etc.

Complementary Group : 43.

Group 71.—When do you put on your hat?—take off your hat?—wipe your boots?—give a receipt?—carry an umbrella?—get a ticket?—make a fire?—open the window? etc.

I put on my hat (etc.) when I go out.—I come in.—I come in.—I receive money.—it rains.—I travel by train.—the room's cold.—the room's warm, etc.

Complementary Group : 47.

Group 72.—When do you go to a shop?—the baker's?—the butcher's?—the grocer's?—the greengrocer's?—the fishmonger's?—the hatter's?—the milliner's?—the tailor's.—the dressmaker's?—the chemist's?—the hairdresser's (*or* barber's).—the printer's?—the dentist's? the post-office?—the station?—the theatre?—a concert?—a bootshop?—a music teacher?—a language teacher?—the stationer's? etc.

I go there when I want to buy something.—buy bread.—buy meat.—buy coffee (etc) —buy vegetables.—buy fish.—buy a hat.—get a new suit.—get a new dress.—get some medicine.—get shaved.—get my hair cut.—get something printed.—have a tooth cut.—buy some stamps.—travel by train.—see a play.—hear music.—buy a pair of boots.—learn music.—learn a foreign language.—buy some envelopes, etc.

Complementary Group 1 48.

Group 73.—What do you do when you're hungry?—you're thirsty?—you're sleepy?—you're tired?—you're in a hurry?—you're busy?—the weather's fine?—it rains? etc.

When I'm hungry (etc.) I eat.—drink.—go to sleep.—rest.—make haste.—work.—go out.—stay at home, etc.

Complementary Group 1 74.

Group 74.—When do you eat?—drink?—go to bed?—rest?—make haste?—work?—go out?—stay at home? etc.

I eat (etc.) when I'm hungry.—I'm thirsty.—I'm sleepy.—I'm tired.—I'm in a hurry.—I'm busy.—the weather's fine.—it rains, etc.

Complementary Group 1 73.

Group 75.—When did I say "yesterday was Monday"? (—Tuesday, etc.).—"to-morrow will be Monday"? (—Tuesday, etc.)—"the day before yesterday was Monday"? (—Tuesday, etc.)—"the day after to-morrow will be Monday"? (—Tuesday, etc.)

You said it on Tuesday (—Wednesday, etc.).—on Sunday (—Monday, etc.).—on Wednesday (—Thursday, etc.).—on Saturday (—Sunday, etc.).

Group 76.—When did I say “yesterday was the 26th of March”? (etc.)—“the day before yesterday was the 26th of March”? (etc.)—“to-morrow will be the 26th of March”? (etc.)—“the day after to-morrow will be the 26th of March”? (etc.)

You said it on the 27th of March (etc.).—on the 28th of March (etc.).—on the 25th of March (etc.).—on the 24th of March (etc.).

Group 77.—When did I say “last month was December”? (etc.)—the month before last was December”? (etc.)—“next month will be December”? (etc.)—“the month after next will be December”? (etc.)

You said it in January (etc.).—in February (etc.).—in November (etc.).—in October (etc.).

Group 78.—When did I say “last year was 1918”? (etc.)—“the year before last was 1918”? (etc.)—“next year will be 1918”? (etc.)—the year after next will be 1918”? (etc.)

You said it in 1919 (etc.).—in 1920 (etc.).—in 1917 (etc.).—in 1916 (etc.).

Group 79.—Why can't you touch the ceiling?—lift a piano?—put a chair into your pocket?—go from here to Paris in one hour?—speak English as I do? etc.

Because it's too high.—it's too heavy.—it's too big.—it's too far from here.—I'm not English, etc., etc.

II. GROUPS IN WHICH THE ALTERNATIVE OR GENERAL QUESTION NECESSARILY REPLACES THE SPECIAL QUESTION.

FORM OF WORK 30. ALTERNATIVE QUESTION GROUPS.

We now have to examine a number of groups, which from the nature of their units are precluded from being cast in the form of Special Questions. We must therefore have recourse to questions of the General or Alternative type; we choose by preference the latter form.

It will be noticed that these Alternative Question Groups are rather less drill-like than those hitherto

dealt with, and are therefore in this respect more allied to the Diversified forms of work that we shall review later. We notice on the other hand, that the greater part of the answer is an echo-like reproduction of the question, and so in this respect, these groups are analogous to those forms of work already treated under the heading "Reproduction."

Most of these groups may be extended indefinitely and used for the purpose of enriching the student's vocabulary.

The teacher of German will note the special utility of these groups in connection with the teaching of the order of words in a subordinate sentence

Group 80.—Is it pleasant or unpleasant to be ill?—be well?—go out when it's raining?—go out when it's fine?—miss the train?—receive presents?—have many friends?—have wet feet?—be cold?—hurt oneself?—be kept waiting?—be robbed?—be deceived?—miss an appointment?—have to work too hard?—be able to express oneself easily?—be separated from one's family?—not to find accommodation in an hotel?—go without food?—go without sleep?—have bad weather?—make progress?—have many enemies?—have fine weather?—receive money?—be attacked?—make a lot of mistakes?—lose money?—be scolded?—be praised?—be insulted?—be blamed?—have to work when one's very tired?—meet an old friend?—have a tooth out?—have to sleep on the floor?—be overcharged?—find something you'd lost?—have a headache?—etc., etc.

Short answer.—It's pleasant, or It's unpleasant.

Long answer.—It's unpleasant to be ill.

Many of the above units may be subdivided into special (and more homogeneous) groups.

Is it pleasant or unpleasant to have to deal with obstinate (—honourable—greedy—dirty—polite—mean—jolly—cruel, etc. etc.) people?

Group 81.—Is it possible or impossible to lock the door without a key?—buy things without money?—walk without feet?—write without a pen?—see without eyes?—cut without a knife?—live without water?—hear when one's deaf?—live without bread?—smell without a nose?—write without hands?—sleep and to read at the same time?—see when one's blind?—travel twenty miles an hour?—understand well when one doesn't

pay attention ?—live without blood ?—learn to speak a foreign language ?—find a needle which you've lost in a field ?—lift five hundred pounds with one hand ?—travel from here to America in one day ?—make progress when one doesn't work ?—lift five pounds with one hand ?—pour water into a bottle without a funnel ?—get over a wall without a ladder ?—learn a foreign language in a week ?—get money without working ? etc., etc.

Variant Questions.

Is it impossible or is it merely difficult to
 Do you consider it possible or impossible to
 Would most people consider it
 Is it generally considered possible to

Group 82.—Is it (generally) necessary or unnecessary to have one's mistakes corrected ?—express oneself clearly when explaining something ?—have a piece of chalk when one writes on the blackboard ?—put on your hat when you go out ?—have water when you wash ?—have a book when you read ?—have a key when you want to lock the door ?—have a stamp when you want to send a letter ?—look at the map when you want to know where you are ?—look at a clock when you want to know the time ?—have money when you buy something ?—have your hair cut now and then ?—carry a walking-stick ?—have something to eat at least once a day ?—speak the truth on every occasion ?—pay attention during the lesson ?—look in the dictionary when you don't know the meaning of a word ?—make a light when you want to see during the night ?—have a stamp when you travel by train ?—have a boat when you want to cross a river ?—be careful when you want to perform a complicated piece of work ?—listen carefully when receiving orders ?—have a motor-car when you want to get from one place to another ?—know the language of the country you're travelling in ?—answer important letters ?—have money in order to be happy ?—take care of oneself when one's ill ? etc., etc.

Variants.

Is it generally considered necessary or unnecessary to
 Do people generally consider it necessary or unnecessary to
 Does it strike you as being necessary or unnecessary to

Group 83.—Is it difficult or easy to speak a foreign language without making mistakes ?—read a badly-written letter ?—do several things at the same time ?—keep dry in rainy weather ?—learn a foreign language without a teacher ?—take photographs when the light's bad ?—speak one's own language ?—keep warm when the weather's very cold ?—understand people who speak clearly ?—pour water into a bottle without a funnel ?—

understand people when they don't speak distinctly ?—please everybody ?—give advice ?—borrow money from strangers ?—avoid quarrels ?—follow instructions which are given clearly ?—open windows ?—avoid misunderstandings ?—learn to make foreign sounds ?—for a child to learn a foreign language ? etc., etc.

Variants.

Do you consider it an easy or a difficult thing to
Is it generally considered easy or difficult to
Do most people find it easy or difficult to
Generally speaking, is it difficult or easy to

Group 84 —Is it usual or unusual to stick a stamp on an envelope ?—stick a stamp on the wall ?—keep coal in a cellar ?—take shelter during a storm ?—ride on cows ?—keep coal in a garden ?—eat horseflesh ?—have keys in one's pocket ?—stick a sixpenny stamp on an envelope ?—eat when one's hungry ?—leave money lying about ?—forget one's own language ?—snut up the house when we go away ?—leave the gas burning all night ?—sleep when one's sleepy ?—have a holiday in the summer ?—drink when one's thirsty ?—make mistakes when one's careful ?—undress before going to bed ?—have money in one's pocket ?—know six foreign languages ?—call in a doctor when one's ill ?—eat salt with one's meat ?—travel without a ticket ?—be late ?—laugh when we hear or see something funny ?—say "thank you" when we receive something ?—eat goat's flesh ?—read the paper every day ?—knock in nails with a hammer ? etc., etc.

Variants.

Do you consider it usual or unusual to
Is it generally considered as usual or unusual to
Is it a usual or an unusual thing to
Do most people consider it usual or unusual to

Group 85.—Is it dangerous or safe to walk on thin ice ?—jump into a moving train ?—cross an empty street ?—lean out of the window of a railway carriage ?—smoke in a powder magazine ?—cross a street when there's a lot of traffic ?—play with a cat ?—neglect an illness ?—travel in a peaceful and civilised country ?—cross railway lines without being careful ?—look out of a window ?—travel in a country during a revolution ?—walk on thick ice ?—swim in shallow water ?—go to a place where there are a lot of wild animals loose ?—ride a bicycle ?—play with loaded firearms ?—stand under a tree during a storm ?—ride down a steep hill on a bicycle without a brake ?—walk about with your eyes shut ?—light a fire in a stove ?—ride a bicycle on a slippery road ?—swim across a river in flood ?—walk along the edge of a cliff ? etc., etc.

Variants.

Is it wise or foolish to

Do you consider it as a wise or as a foolish thing to

Is it generally considered

Would you advise anybody to

In your opinion is it dangerous or safe to

Group 86.—Is it right or wrong to say that a horse is an animal?—a horse is a bird?—a boot's made of leather?—a letter-box generally contains letters?—we cut with a knife?—we cut with a key? etc., etc.

This type of unit may be developed indefinitely, and may include such long questions as:

Is it right or wrong to say that it's generally possible to earn money without working.¹?

Variants.

Is it correct or incorrect to say

Would it be right or wrong to say that

Do you consider it right or wrong to say that

Is it right or wrong to state (maintain, etc.) that

Group 87.—Which is better: to pronounce well or badly?—to speak correctly or incorrectly?—to write clearly or not to write clearly?—to enjoy oneself or not to enjoy oneself?—to eat too much or not to eat too much?—to feel well or not to feel well?—to know one language or two languages?—to have enough work or not to have enough?—to work or not to work?—to have a headache or not to have a headache?—to have the toothache or not to have the toothache?—to be intelligent or foolish?—to be free or in prison?—to receive money or to lose money?—to be polite or to be impolite?—to get anywhere too early or too late?—to come late or not to come at all?—to do a thing well or badly?—to be nearly right or quite right?—to be attentive or inattentive during a lesson?—to be happy or unhappy?—to make mistakes or not to make mistakes?—to be honest or dishonest?—to remember things or to forget things?—to be amused or bored? etc.

Variants.

Which seems to you to be better (to be a better thing)

Which do you consider better of these two things

Which is generally considered better

¹ Note the value of such units in teaching German word-order: "Ist es richtig oder falsch zu sagen, dass es gewöhnlich möglich ist, Geld zu verdienen ohne zu arbeiten?"

Group 88.—Would you rather learn Spanish or Italian?—learn Russian or Dutch?—learn music or geometry?—learn singing or dancing?—learn mathematics or chemistry?—have a cat or a dog?—have a horse or a motor-car?—be well or ill?—eat an orange or an apple?—eat cooked meat or raw meat?—have tough or tender meat?—write with a fine or a thick nib?—read interesting books or uninteresting ones?—drink cold tea or hot tea?—go for your holidays in Summer or in Winter?—sleep in a bed or on the floor?—spend the night at home or at an hotel?—go to Norway or to Spain?—play cards or football?—find a ten-shilling note or a five-pound note?—receive good or bad news?—live in a town or in the country?—live in a warm country or in a cold one?—work during the day or during the night?—sleep during the day or during the night?—sleep well or badly?—read by gaslight or by candle-light?—catch the train or lose it?—have to deal with pleasant or with unpleasant people?—travel when the weather's fine or when it's bad?—take your lessons in the morning or in the evening?

Variants.

Which would you rather learn: Spanish or Italian?

Which would you rather do: learn Spanish or Italian?

Would you like to learn Spanish? Or would you rather learn Italian?

Which of these two things would you rather do: to

Which would you feel more inclined to do: to etc.

Group 89.—Which is larger: an elephant or a mouse?—longer: a walking stick or a match?—wider: a river or a stream?—thicker: brown paper or writing paper?—higher: a mountain or a hill?—deeper: the sea or a river?—cheaper: a gold watch or a silver one?—colder: ice or water?—nearer: Australia or Spain?—heavier: wood or iron?—softer: cloth or velvet?—sharper: a knife or a razor?—shorter: a match or a matchbox?—smaller: a mouse or a rat?—lighter: a feather or a key?—warmer: a fire or a candle?—brighter: the sun or the moon?—stronger: a horse or a man?—more comfortable: an armchair or an ordinary chair? etc.

Variants.

Which of these two things is larger

Which is the larger of these two things

Group 90.—

Which contains more inhabitants: a large town or a small one?

Which contains more inhabitants: a town or a village?

Which contains more pages: a large book or a small one?

Which contains more rooms: a large house or a small one?

Which contains more words: a long sentence or a short one? etc.

Group 91.—Which goes faster : a train or a ship ?—a bicycle or an aeroplane ?—a steamer or a sailing-ship ? etc.

Group 92.—Which shines brighter : the sun or the moon ?—the moon or the stars ?—the sun or the stars ?—a candle or electric light ?—the fire or the gas ? etc.

Variant.

Which gives us a brighter light

The next category of Conventional Conversation is a series of groups requiring on the part of the student mere repetition and conversion. An unlimited number of units may be composed by the teacher. As a method of learning words, this form of work is less valuable than those which precede ; on the other hand, however, these groups develop the student's capacity for understanding long and rapidly enunciated sentences, and of producing long and fluent answers.

Another advantage lies in the facility with which the student may be caused to master various difficulties in grammar and syntax. Notable examples of this are to be found in the French equivalents of some of the groups, and which oblige the student to convert imperative into subjunctive sentences.

III. GROUPS INVOLVING MERE CONVERSION.

FORM OF WORK 31. COMMANDS.

Group 93.—Ask me (or Tell me) to open the door—shut the window—stand up—take my book—open my book—touch the table, etc.

Answers.

(Please) open the door.

Open the door, please.

Just open the door.

Will you open the door (please) ?

Will you just open the door ?

Open the door, will you ?

Would you mind opening the door ?

You might just open the door, etc., etc

Group 94.—Ask me (Tell me—) not to open the door—shut the window, etc., etc.

Answers.

(Please) don't open the door.

Don't open the door, please.

Don't open the door, will you ?

Would you mind not opening the door ? etc., etc.

Group 95.—Ask me for my book—my pen—a stamp—a twopenny stamp—a few matches—one or two sheets of paper, etc.

Answers.

Please give me (—let me have) your book, etc.

Would you mind giving me (—letting me have) your book ? etc.

Group 96.—Ask me whether I'll give you (—let you have) my book, etc.

Group 97.—Ask me whether I think (—believe—suppose—imagine, etc.) it's going to rain—it's going to be fine—it's likely to rain—it's going to snow this evening—we're going to have fine weather next week—it's likely to be cold to-morrow—it's too warm in this room—it's going to freeze to-night, etc., etc.

Group 98.—Ask me the time—my name—the number of my house—my address—what street I live in—my age—the colour of this book—the name of that object, etc.

(The teacher need not answer the resultant questions.)

FORM OF WORK 32. QUESTIONS (TYPE I).

Group 99.—What do you say when you want to know whether someone speaks French ?—someone understands you ?—someone likes reading ?—someone's friend came here yesterday ?—there's a book in the drawer ? etc., etc.

Answer.

When I want to know whether someone speaks French, I say " Do you speak French ? " etc.

Group 100.—What do you say when you want to know what somebody's doing ?—somebody does on Sundays ?—somebody did the day before ?—somebody has just done ?—somebody's going to do the next day ?—something's made of ?—something is ?—something's used for ? etc., etc.

Answer.

When I want to know what somebody's doing, I say " What are you doing ? " etc.

Group 101.—What do you say when you want to know who somebody is?—came here the day before?—is coming?—gives lessons? etc.

Answer.

When I want to know who somebody is, I say "Who is he?" etc.

The number of units of such types being practically unlimited, it will suffice to note the following outline forms and variants.

What do you say when (—if) you want (—wish—are anxious, etc.) to know whether (—what—who—whom—to whom—with whom, etc.)—which—whose—where—when—how—how much—how many—how often—how long—why) someone (something, etc.)?

The following group is useful:

What do you say when you want to know how long somebody has been here?—there?—away?—upstairs?—ill?—busy?—abroad?—reading?—speaking?—writing?—living in London? etc.

Answer.

When I want to know how long somebody has been here, I say, "How long have you been here?"

Note the French equivalent:

Qu'est-ce que vous dites quand vous voulez savoir depuis quand quelqu'un est ici?—là?—parti?—en haut?—malade?—occupé?—à l'étranger?—lit?—parle?—écrit?—habite Londres? etc.

The Complementary groups to the above may be formed according to the following models:

Group 102.—

When do you say "Do you speak French?" etc.

— "What's that?" etc.

— "Who's that?" etc.

— "Who(m) did you see?" etc.

— "To whom do you give lessons?"

or "Who(m) do you give lessons to?" etc.

— "Which book did you take?" etc.

— "Whose book is that?" etc.

— "Where do you live?" etc.

— "When do you come here?" etc.

— "How do you pronounce that?" etc.

— "How much is that?" etc.

— "How many did you see?" etc.

— "How often do you go to London?" etc.

— "How long have you been here?" etc.

— "Why do you come here?" etc.

Answers.

I say, "Do you speak French?" when I want to know whether somebody speaks French, etc., etc.

FORM OF WORK 33. QUESTIONS (TYPE 2).

Group 103.—What do you say when you want (—wish), someone (—somebody) to write to you?—read something?—shut the door?—sit down?—give you something to eat?

Answers.

When I want someone to write to me I say, "Write to me." ("Please write to me."—"Will you write to me?" etc.)

Complementary Group to above :

Group 104.—When do you say: "Write to me"?—"Read that"? etc

Answers.

I say, "Write to me" when I want someone to write to me, etc.

Note the French equivalent introducing the subjunctive :

Qu'est-ce que vous dites quand vous voulez que quelqu'un vous écrive? etc.

Answer.

Quand je veux que quelqu'un m'écrive, je lui dis "Écrivez-moi," etc.

Complementary Group :

Quand est-ce que vous dites: "Écrivez-moi"?

Answer.

Je dis "Écrivez-moi quand je veux que quelqu'un m'écrive," etc.

Group 103.—What do you say when you don't want somebody to forget something?—break something?—leave his umbrella somewhere?—waste something?—throw something away?—make any mistakes?—keep something too long?—make your book dirty?—make a noise?—burn something?

Answers.

When I don't want somebody to forget something, I say "Don't forget it," etc.

Variant Answers.

Mind you don't forget it.

Don't forget it, will you? etc.

You'd better not forget it, etc.

Variant Questions.

What do you say when you're afraid somebody's going to forget something? What do you say (in order) to prevent somebody from forgetting something, etc.? What would you say if you didn't want somebody to forget something, etc.? What would you say if you were afraid somebody was going to forget something, etc.? What would you say if you wanted to (in order to) warn somebody against forgetting something, etc.?

Complementary Groups to above 1

Group 106.—When do you say "Don't forget it"? etc. When would you say "Don't forget it"? etc.

Variant endings.

"Mind you don't forget it!" "Don't you forget it!" "You'd better not forget it" etc.

Answers.

I say, "Don't forget it" when I don't want somebody to forget something, etc.

Variant Answers.

I should say "Don't forget it" if I didn't want somebody to forget something, etc.

When I'm afraid somebody's going to forget something, etc. . .

In order to prevent somebody from forgetting something, etc. .

If I were afraid that somebody were going to forget something, etc.

Another set of variants may be formed on the following model:

When do you tell people not to forget something? etc.

Answer.

I tell people not to forget something when I don't want them to forget something, etc.

COMPLETION OF SENTENCES.

The following series of groups have similar functions to those we have just examined: they entail repetitions and conversion. Instead, however, of being in the form of questions and answers, or of commands and responses, they take the form of an incomplete statement to be completed by the student.

FORM OF WORK 34. COMPLETION OF SENTENCES
(TYPE 1).*Group 107.—*

Iron's heavier than wood, therefore wood

Therefore wood's lighter than iron.

Russia's larger than England, therefore England

Therefore England's smaller than Russia.

The sun's larger than the moon, therefore

Therefore the moon's smaller than the sun.

A mountain's higher than a hill, therefore

Therefore a hill's lower than a mountain.

The teacher can complete this series by reference to Form of Work 30, Groups 89 to 92.

Variants.

Iron's heavier than wood, therefore wood isn't . . .

Therefore wood isn't as heavy as iron, etc.

FORM OF WORK 35. COMPLETION OF SENTENCES
(TYPE 2).*Group 108.—*

If I take a book, then the book

Then the book's taken (by you).

If I write a letter, then the letter

Then the letter's written (by you).

If I see something, then something

Then something is seen (by you).

If my brother breaks something, then something

Then something's broken by your brother.

If my brother sees a man, then the man

Then the man's seen by your brother.

Tense Variants.

If I took a book yesterday, then

Then a book was taken (by you) yesterday, etc.

If I took a book to-morrow, then

Then the book would be taken (by you) to-morrow, etc.

If I take a book to-morrow, then

Then the book will be taken (by you) to-morrow, etc.

If I've taken a book, then

Then the book has been taken (by you), etc.

Other Variants.

- If I must take a book, then
 Then the book must be taken (by you), etc.
 If I ought to take a book, then
 Then the book ought to be taken (by you), etc.
 If I'd better take a book, then
 Then the book had better be taken (by you), etc.

Or

- I take a book. That means that (*or*, That is to say) the book . . .
 That means that (*or*, That is to say) the book is taken
 (by you), etc.

Note the value of this conversion exercise in teaching German.

Mein Bruder hat einen Mann gesehen, das heisst dass
Das heisst dass ein Mann von Ihrem Bruder gesehen worden ist.

This response should be completely memorized, and the teacher should subsequently cause the student to complete many other sentences constructed on the same model (*e.g.* Der Mann hat den Bleistift genommen. .)

Group 109.—

- I go to the station every day, consequently, yesterday
 Yesterday you went to the station.
 I come here every day, consequently, yesterday
 Yesterday you came here.
 I give lessons every day, consequently, yesterday
 Yesterday you gave a lesson.
 I go for a walk every day, consequently, last Monday
 Last Monday you went for a walk.
 I write to my friend every week, consequently, last week . . .
 Last week you wrote to your friend.
 I go to the station every day, consequently, to-morrow
 To-morrow you'll go to the station, etc., etc

Group 110.—

- My friend does whatever I ask him to do.
 If I asked him to go to the station
 He'd go to the station.
 If I asked him to come here
 He'd come here.
 If I asked him to write to me
 He'd write to you, etc., etc

Variant.

My friend does whatever I ask him to do.

If I'd asked him to go to the station yesterday

He'd have gone to the station.

If I'd asked him to come here

He'd have come here.

If I'd have asked him to write to me

He'd have written to you, etc., etc.

IV. QUESTIONS ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE LANGUAGE.

The fourth and last division of Conventional Conversation of the Contextual Type contains a number of groups dealing with the theory of the language being studied. Like certain other types of work already described, they form no essential part of the conversation course, but may be sandwiched in between more interesting forms of work.

FORM OF WORK 36. CONJUGATION.

Group 111.—What's the past tense of the verb *to take*?—*see*?—*give*?—*speak*?—*know*?—*get*?—*stay*?—*understand*?—*write*?—*read*?—*like*?—*wait*?—*learn*? etc., etc.

Answers.

Took, saw, gave, spoke, etc.

Group 112.—What's the past participle of the verb *to take*?—*see*?—*give*? etc.

Answers.

Taken, seen, given, etc.

Group 113.—What's the negative of *I take*?—*I see*?—*I give*?—*I am*?¹ etc.

Answers.

I don't take, I don't see, I don't give, I'm not, etc.

¹ If considered desirable, these, and the units of the following groups may be put in the form of complete sentences: e.g. *I take a book, I see him, I give it to him, I'm ready, etc.*

Group 114.—What's the interrogative of *He takes?*—*He sees?*—*He gives?*—*He is?* etc.

Answers.

Does he take?—*Does he see?*—*Does he give?*—*Is he?* etc.

Group 115.—What's the interrogative-negative of *You see?*—*You can?*—*You are?*—*You do?* etc.

Answers.

Don't you see? *Can't you?* *Aren't you?* *Don't you do?* etc.

Group 116.—What's the progressive form of *I give?*—*I take?*—*I go?* etc.

Answers.

I'm giving, I'm taking, I'm going, etc.

Group 117.—What's the present perfect of *I give?*—*I take?*—*I come?* etc.

Answers.

I've given, I've taken, I've come, etc.

FORM OF WORK 37. DECLENSION OF THE NOUN.

Group 118.—What's the plural of *pen?*—*cat?*—*foot?*—*house?*—*life?*—*bath?*—*hand?*—*week?*—*church?*—*finger?*—*address?* etc.

Answers

(Pronounced) *penz, kæts, fi:t, hauziz, laivz, bæ:ðz, hændz, wi:ks, tʃə:tʃiz, fiŋgəz, ədresiz,* etc.

FORM OF WORK 38. COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES.

Group 119.—What's the comparative of *large?*—*small?*—*good?*—*bad?*—*long?*—*comfortable?*—*happy?*—*far?*—*many?*—*rich?*—*interesting?*—*much?* etc.

Answers.

Larger, smaller, better, worse, longer, more, comfortable, happier, further (or farther), more, richer, more interesting, more, etc.

Group 120.—What's the superlative of *large?*—*small?*—*good?* etc.

Answers.

Largest, smallest, best, etc.

FORM OF WORK 39. CONTRARIES.

Group 121.—What's the contrary (opposite) of *good*?—*high*?—*large*?—*rich*?—*wide*?—*fat*?—*thick*?—*light*?—*possible*?—*dry*?—*soft*?—*pleasant*?—*strong*?—*right*?—*nice*?—*rough*?—*useful*?—*sharp*?—*deep*?—*bad*?—*low*?—*small*?—*well*?—*quite*? etc., etc.

Answers.

Bad, low, small, etc.

FORM OF WORK 40. SYNONYMS.

Group 122.—What word (generally—always—often) means (nearly) the same thing as *nearly*?—*hardly*?—*big*?—*little*?—*unsafe*?—*correct*?—*also*?—*someone*?—*require*?—*wide*?—*wrong*?—*quickly*? etc.

Answers.

Almost, scarcely, large, small, dangerous, right, too, somebody want, broad, incorrect, fast, etc.

FORM OF WORK 41. WORD BUILDING.

Group 123.—What verb corresponds in meaning to the noun *attention*?—*composition*?—*confusion*?—*destruction*?—*division*?—*introduction*?—*permission*?—*revolution*?—*subscription*? etc.

Answers.

To attend, to compose, to confuse, to destroy, to divide, to introduce, to permit, to revolt, to subscribe, etc.

Group 124.—What noun corresponds in meaning to the verb *to attend*?—*to compose*?—*to confuse*? etc.

Answers.

Attention, composition, confusion, etc.

Group 125.—What noun corresponds in meaning to the adjective *long*?—*high*?—*happy*?—*absent*?—*rapid*?—*wide*?—*impatient*?—*large*?—*dry*?—*broad*?—*white*?—*important*?—*deep*?—*musical*?—*generous*?

Answers.

Length, height, happiness, absence, rapidity, width, impatience, size, dryness, breadth, whiteness, importance, depth, music, generosity, etc.

Having exhausted most of the possibilities of Conventional Conversation in the form of *Groups*, we will now examine the chief varieties of

CONVENTIONAL CONVERSATION IN DIVERSIFIED FORM.

Heterogeneous Mixtures of the Units contained in the Foregoing Groups.

As we have already stated, this *catalogue of forms of work* is not a *Programme of Work*; it merely sets forth in logical order the material from which the teacher can compose the programme which he considers the most likely to suit the requirements of his students.

Conventional conversation in diversified form should be incorporated into the programme at a fairly early stage, indeed the type of work under immediate consideration should be used almost immediately after the introduction of the drill-like forms of conversation. When the student is sufficiently familiar with any two (or more) groups, he should be called upon to answer questions from both (or from all) even when they are mixed indiscriminately. Such mixtures may be graded almost to infinity.

FORM OF WORK 42. HETEROGENEOUS MIXTURES OF OSTENSIVE UNITS.

Example of a Mixture of the Noun Groups contained
in Form of Work 18.

What's this ?	It's a book.
Is that the window or the door ?	It's the window.
What am I touching ?	You're touching the table.
What's this made of ?	It's made of glass.
Is that the ceiling ?	Yes, it is.
What's this ?	It's a chair.
What am I looking at ? etc	You're looking at the door, etc.

Example of a mixture of the above types with the pronoun and adjective groups contained in Forms of Work 19 and 20.

Is this a book ?	Yes, it is.
Is this table round or square ?	It's square.
How many chairs can you see here ?	I can see six.
What's the colour of the ceiling ?	It's white.
Whose pencil's this ?	It's yours.
How many matches have I got ?	You've got three.
Will you tell me what this is ?	It's a chair.
Is this a green book or a red one ?	It's a red one, etc.

Examples of a Mixture of the above types with the Verb groups contained in Form of Work 21.

Where am I standing ?	You're standing at the table.
What's this ?	It's the wall.
What am I doing ?	You're going to the door.
What's the table made of ?	It's made of wood.
What have I just done ?	You've just taken a pen.
Whose book is that ?	It's mine.
What am I doing now ?	You're opening your book.
Are you sitting down or standing up ?	I'm sitting down.
Is that the ceiling or the floor ?	It's the ceiling.
What am I writing with ? etc.	You're writing with a piece of chalk.

Example of a General Mixture of all the groups contained in the Ostensive Forms of Work 18 to 23.

Is the pencil on the chair or on the table ?	It's on the chair.
What have I just done ?	You've just opened the door.
What's that ?	It's a key.
What am I doing now ?	You're writing.
Where's your book ?	It's here.
Is the table in front of me ?	Yes, it is.
What's the colour of this book ?	It's red.
Where's my key ?	It's in your pocket.
Is this a large box, or a small one? etc., etc.	It's a small one.

We need hardly point out that answering mixed questions is much more difficult than answering the

same questions when they appear in groups. A student who answers unhesitatingly and faultlessly in the latter case may give a poor account of himself when called upon to answer the mixed questions. No unit may be considered as having been assimilated until the student can answer the question when it is separated from the other members of the group to which it belongs.

FORM OF WORK 43. HETEROGENEOUS MIXTURES OF THE CONTEXTUAL UNITS.

The units of the contextual groups may also be given in heterogeneous form, and graded to infinity. We may mix the units contained in any two similar groups or we may compose a complete mixture of all the hundreds of groups and variants suggested in Form of Work 12.

The chief difficulty in connection with this form of work is the ensuring of proper grading. How can we compose a mixture containing all the units of the groups already studied, but excluding those which have not yet been introduced?

The teacher has composed a programme consisting of (let us say) 100 groups. The students have got as far as (let us say) group 25, and give correct and fluent answers to all the questions contained in the 25 groups. The teacher now wishes to recapitulate everything in the form of a general mixture, how is he to do that? He can indeed spread out on his table the 25 groups and proceed to question the students by choosing his units here and there at random, but this plan does not generally ensure a sufficient degree of regularity. What ought to be a constant and rapid stream of questions and answers takes the form of a desultory questioning with hesitations and awkward pauses.

The best and most systematic plan is for each student to compose his own *Progressive mixture*. The following is the procedure to be adopted.

Having practised the Group 1, he takes a new exercise-book, opens it at random and writes question 1 on the

left-hand page,¹ and the answer to it on the corresponding line of the right-hand page. He turns to another page (in a different part of his book) and writes unit 2 in the same way; on another page unit 3 and so on until the group (not exceeding 15 units) has been copied. After having practised Group 2, he copies out the units in the same way, distributing them through the pages of his exercise book. Groups 1 and 2 are therefore now written out in mixed order. When Group 3 has been practised, the student enters the units into his book as before, and so on.

The units belonging to any one group should be separated from each other as far as possible, for this reason he should avoid writing two units on one page so long as any blank pages remain in his book. Similarly he should not write three units on one page as long as there are any pages with only one unit written on them.

Assuming that each group contains 10 units, when the student has arrived at Group 25, his exercise book will contain 250 units, in mixed order, but there will still be large blanks separating these units. As he proceeds in his work these blanks will gradually grow smaller until every line in his book is written on.²

If these directions are carried out systematically, each student will have at his (and at his teacher's) disposal a perfect mixture of all the material so far introduced and practised. At each lesson the teacher will borrow the book, and ask the questions in the order in which they have been written by the student.

The reader may have noted with some displeasure, and may be inclined to criticize, the "heterogenous" succession of the units as suggested in the preceding pages. He may protest, (and may possibly be justified in protesting) against forms of work which contain such abrupt changes from one subject to another (a French reader might call it "*la systemisation du coq à l'âne*").

¹ Not necessarily on the first line.

² Care, of course, should be taken in the first instance, to see that the exercise book is sufficiently, but not unduly, large.

If this is indeed a grave defect, it is at any rate one which is shared by a large number of language exercises both ancient and modern. We may point out, however, that those who have been using such forms of work for years past do not find this a serious defect, but consider on the contrary that the unexpectedness of the questions fosters those qualities of alertness and promptitude which are so desirable in the case of students of spoken language.

For the benefit of those who maintain the objection, we suggest alternative types of mixture which for want of a better term we may call "sequential series," for there is at least a facial resemblance between these and the "sequential groups" that we have already examined.

SEQUENTIAL SERIES OF CONVERSATIONAL UNITS.

A "sequential series" may be defined as "a series of units (not in drill-like or group form) in logical or semantic sequence." The answer to the first question (or command) suggests a supplementary question, the answer to which suggests a further question and so on, the whole series forming a connected whole. We need hardly point out that this is a form of work necessitating on the part of the teacher far more preparation than the heterogeneous mixtures already described, and that it is far less susceptible to gradation.

FORM OF WORK 44. SEQUENTIAL SERIES OF OSTENSIVE UNITS.

Example 1.

What's this ?	It's a book.
Whose is it ?	It's yours.
What's the colour of it ?	It's red.
Is it open or shut ?	It's shut.
What am I doing now ?	You're opening it.
Is it open or shut now ?	It's open.
Who opened it ?	You did.
Are you reading it ?	No, I'm not.

Who's reading it ?	<i>You are</i>
What am I doing now ?	<i>You're shutting the book</i>
Where am I putting it ?	<i>You're putting it in the drawer.</i>
Where's the book now ?	<i>It's in the drawer.</i>
Can you see it ?	<i>No, I can't.</i>
Why not ?	<i>Because it's in the drawer.</i>
Who put it there ?	<i>You did.</i>
When did I put it there ?	<i>You put it there just now.</i>
Did I put my book in the drawer, or yours ?	<i>You put yours there.</i>
Where's yours ?	<i>It's here.</i>
Are you reading it ?	<i>No, I'm not.</i>
Is it open ? etc., etc	<i>No, it isn't.</i>

Example 2

What's this ?	<i>It's a piece of chalk.</i>
What's the colour of it ?	<i>It's white.</i>
Who's holding it ?	<i>You are.</i>
What am I doing with it ?	<i>You're writing with it.</i>
What am I writing on ?	<i>You're writing on the black-board.</i>
Have I written one word or several ?	<i>You've written several.</i>
Have I written a sentence ?	<i>Yes, you have.</i>
Is it written in French or in English ?	<i>It's written in English.</i>
Can you read it ?	<i>Yes, I can.</i>
What's the first word ?	<i>The first word's " I."</i>
What's the second word ?	<i>The second word's " am."</i>
Is the third word " giving " ?	<i>Yes, it is.</i>
What word comes after " giving " ?	<i>The word " you."</i>
What are the two last words ?	<i>" A lesson."</i>
Read the whole sentence.	<i>" I am giving you a lesson."</i>
Is that true ?	<i>Yes, it is.</i>
What sort of lesson am I giving ? etc.	<i>You're giving an English lesson.</i>

Example 3.

Is that the window or the door ?	<i>It's the window.</i>
Can you see through it ?	<i>Yes, I can.</i>
Can you see through the door ?	<i>No, I can't.</i>
Why not ?	<i>Because the door's made of wood.</i>
How is it you can see through the window ?	<i>Because it's made of glass.</i>
What can you see if you look out of the window ?	<i>I can see a tree</i>

Can you see anything else ?	Yes, I can
What else can you see ?	I can see the sky
What colour's the sky now ?	It's grey.
What colour's the tree ?	It's green.
Are there any leaves on the tree ?	Yes, there are.
Can you count them ?	No, I can't.
Why not ?	Because there are too many.
Can you count the chairs in this room ?	Yes, I can.
How many are there ? etc., etc.	There are six.

Example 4.

Take twelve matches out of this box	
How many have you taken ?	I've taken twelve.
Put them on the table.	
How many are there on the table ?	There are twelve.
Take one away and tell me how many there are left.	There are eleven left.
Give me ten of them.	
How many have you got : how many have I got, and how many are left on the table ?	I've got one ; you've got two, and there are nine left on the table.
Put four of them on the chair and five of them on the floor.	
How many are there on the chair ?	There are four.
And how many are there on the floor ?	There are five.
How many are there left on the table ?	There aren't any left on the table.
Why not ?	Because I've taken them all ;
Why did you take them ?	Because you told me to.

*FORM OF WORK 45. SEQUENTIAL SERIES OF CONTEXTUAL UNITS.**Example 1.*

Where's London ?	It's in England.
Is it the capital of England ?	Yes, it is.
Is it a large town or a small one ?	It's a large town.
Is it in the North of England or in the South ?	It's in the South of England.
Is Birmingham in England too ?	Yes, it is.
Is it larger than London ?	No, it isn't.
Is Paris in England too ?	No, it isn't.
Where's Paris ?	It's in France.
Is France a town or a country ?	It's a country.
What language do they speak in France ?	They speak French there.

Do you speak French ?	Yes, I do. (No, I don't.)
What language do people speak in England ?	They speak English there.
Is Glasgow in England ?	No, it isn't.
Where is it ?	It's in Scotland.
Where's Scotland ?	It's to the North of England
Where's France ?	It's to the South of England.
What's the capital of England ?	London (is).
Can you tell me the name of the capital of Italy ?	Rome.
What language do they speak in Italy ?	They speak Italian there.
Is Yorkshire a town ?	No, it isn't.
What is it ?	It's a county.
Can you tell me the names of any other counties in England ?	Yes, Lancashire, Norfolk, Devonshire, Kent.
Is France in Europe or in Asia ?	It's in Europe.
Can you tell me the names of any other European countries ?	Yes, Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Spain.

Example 2.

What's the first month of the year called ?	It's called January.
Is it generally a warm month ?	No, it's generally cold.
How many days are there in January ?	There are 31.
What month comes before January ?	December (does).
And what month comes after ?	February (does).
Which is the shortest month of the year ?	February (is).
Is January one of the Winter months ?	Yes, it is.
Is Winter a month or a season ?	It's a season.
How many seasons are there ?	There are four.
What are their names ?	Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter.
Which season do you prefer ?	I prefer . . .
Do we generally have fine weather in Winter ?	No, we don't.
What's the weather generally like in Summer ?	It's generally fine and warm.
In what season does it snow ?	In Winter.
Does it sometimes snow in Spring ?	Yes, it sometimes does, but not often.
Does it ever snow in Summer ?	No, it never snows in Summer.

Example 3.

What's a horse ?	It's an animal
Is it a useful or a useless animal ?	It's a useful animal.
Can it fly ?	No, it can't.
Why not ?	Because it hasn't any wings
What animals generally have wings ?	Birds.
What are birds covered with ?	Feathers.
Where do birds live ?	They live in nests
Where do we generally find nests ?	We generally find them in trees.
What do we often find in the nests ?	We often find eggs there.
Is the swan a bird ?	Yes, it is.
Is a swan's neck long or short ?	It's long.
What's the colour of a swan ?	It's white.
Can swans swim ?	Yes, they can.
Can fishes fly ?	No (not generally).
Where do fishes live ?	They live in the water.
What do we call people who catch fish ?	We call them fishermen.
And what do we call people who sell fish ?	We call them fishmongers.
Do fishes have legs ?	No, they don't.
Do they have tails ?	Yes, they do.
Do horses have tails ? etc., etc.	Yes, they do.

FORM OF WORK 46. SEQUENTIAL SERIES BASED ON MATTER PREVIOUSLY READ OR RELATED.

A third variety of sequential series is that which is based on a story or any other connected passage previously read or related by the teacher or by the students themselves. This form of work is too well known to require any detailed description ; it is particularly characteristic of what is known as the *Direct Method*, and is embodied in countless textbooks. The teacher may note, however, that the questions are of two classes :
(a) Those based on the actual text of the story, and
(b) those suggested incidentally by the context.

Example.

(a) Where did Ellen go ?	She went to the well.
(a) Why did she go there ?	She went there to get a pail of water.
(What did she go there for ?)	

- (b) Do you generally go to a well
when you want a pail of
water ? No, I don't.
I go to the tap.
- (b) Where do you go, then ?
- (a) What did she see when she got
to the well ? She saw a poor old man
- (b) What's the contrary of poor ? Rich.
- (b) And the contrary of old ? Young.
- (a) What was the old man doing ? He was sitting on the
stump of a tree.
- (b) Are you sitting on the stump of
a tree ? No, I'm sitting on a
chair.
- (a) What did Ellen notice about
the old man ? That his clothes and boots
were dusty as if he had
been walking many miles.
- (b) Do your boots get dusty if you
go for a long walk in
Summer ? Yes, they do.
- (b) And if you go for a long walk in
Winter, too ? No, in Winter they gener-
ally get muddy.
- (b) What do we generally do when
our boots are dusty or
muddy ? etc. We generally clean them.

FORM OF WORK 47. ENUMERATION.

In the category of Conventional Conversation of the Diversified type we must include *Enumeration*, a form of work in which the teacher calls upon the student to mention a number of things in succession.

Examples.

Tell me the names of some of the things you see in this room.
Tell me the names of some of the things you have in your pocket.

Tell me the names of some—

- domestic animals.
- wild animals.
- birds.
- flowers.
- trees.
- English towns.
- European countries.
- metals.
- pieces of furniture.
- parts of the body.
- articles of clothing.
- English coins.

Tell me the names of some— musical instruments.

— tools.

— colours.

— languages, etc., etc.

What are the names of the twelve months ?

— seven days ?

— four seasons ?

— four cardinal points ?

— letters of the alphabet ?

Count from one to ten—

— ten to twenty, etc.

Give me the ordinal numbers from "first" to "tenth,"

— "tenth" to "twentieth," etc.

FORM OF WORK 48. CONVENTIONAL CONVERSATION ADAPTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF SYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION EXERCISES.

Conventional conversation of the diversified type may be specifically developed in such a way as to constitute a series of systematic exercises in pronunciation.

Example 1.

To give the pupil an opportunity to practise the vowel in the word "*first*."

What month of the year's January ?

It's the *first*.

What do we do with a spoon ?

We *stir* with it.

What do we do with coal or gas ?

We *burn* it.

What verb means "to cause pain" or "to be painful" ?

To *hurt*.

What does a wheel do ?

It *turns*.

What does a dictionary contain ?

It contains *words*.

What do most people do to earn their living ? etc., etc.

They *work*.

Example 2.

To give the pupil an opportunity to practise the diphthong in the word "*came*."

What's the past tense of the verb "to come" ?

Came.

What's another name for the "day of the month" ?

The *date*.

What's the contrary of "early" ?

Late.

What do we generally write on ?

We generally write on *paper*.

What does four and four make ? etc., etc.

It makes *eight*.

Example 3.

To give the pupil an opportunity to practise the final weak vowel in "*winter*."

What's the coldest season called ?	It's called <i>Winter</i> .
What month comes after September ?	<i>October</i> .
What do we call a place that shelters ships and boats ?	We call it a <i>harbour</i> .
Where's New York ?	It's in <i>America</i> .
What part of the body's this ?	It's your <i>shoulder</i> .
What's a table ?	It's a piece of <i>furniture</i> .
etc., etc.	

Example 4.

To give the pupil an opportunity to practise syllabic "*n*."

Can you give me a word meaning nearly the same thing as "sure" ?	<i>Certain</i> .
What do we call the flesh of the sheep ?	We call it <i>mutton</i> .
What's the contrary of "gradual" ?	<i>Sudden</i> .
Where do you go when you want to take the train ?	I go to the <i>station</i> .
What's the largest land animal ?	The <i>elephant</i> .
What comes between the first and the third ?	The <i>second</i> .
etc., etc.	

Example 5.

To give the pupil an opportunity to practise the French nasal vowel in "*dent*."

Avec quoi est-ce qu'on mord ?	On mord avec les <i>dents</i> .
Quel est le contraire de "vite" ?	<i>Lentement</i> .
Qu'est-ce qu'on porte sur les mains ?	On y porte des <i>gants</i> .
Quel est le contraire du mot "avec" ?	<i>Sans</i> .
Est-ce que l'éléphant est petit ?	Non, il est <i>grand</i> .
etc., etc.	

**FORM OF WORK 49. CONVENTIONAL CONVERSATION
ADAPTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF TEACHING
GRAMMATICAL DISTINCTIONS.**

Conventional conversation of the diversified type may be specifically developed in such a way as to constitute a series of systematic exercises in Grammatical

and other distinctions. Such exercises if composed carefully and intelligently will often take the place of rules of grammar.

"Let the example precede or even replace the rule. A well-chosen example or set of examples may so completely embody the rule that the rule itself will be superfluous."¹

"Choose as many real examples as possible, examples suggested by present and actual conditions. Do not teach the mechanism of direct and indirect objects by allusions to imaginary farmers giving imaginary oats to imaginary horses, but give books, pencils, and pens to the students and make them give them to you, and then talk to them about what you are doing. Do not illustrate the active and passive voices by reference to men beating boys and boys being beaten, but speak about writing words and words being written or about speaking English and English being spoken."²

The following examples are intended as suggestions rather than as models. For such work to be fully effective, the teacher must know a good deal about the habits, likes, dislikes, movements, and circumstances of his students, and the students must have similar information concerning the teacher, which is not always possible or desirable.

Example 1.

To teach the difference between *I take* and *I am taking*, etc.

(The Teacher should stand in front of the window.)

Do I stand in front of the window when

I give my lessons?

No, you don't.

Am I standing in front of the window?

Yes, you are.

(The Teacher should sit on the edge of the table.)

Do I sit on the table?

No, you don't.

Am I sitting on the table?

Yes, you are.

(The students are aware that the teacher can speak French.)

Do I speak French?

Yes, you do.

Am I speaking French?

No, you're not.

¹ *The Principles of Language-Study*, p. 133.

² *Ibid.*, p. 135.

(The students are aware that the Teacher is a smoker.)

Do I smoke ?	Yes, you do.
Am I smoking ?	No, you're not
Do I (sometimes) laugh ?	Yes, you do.
Am I laughing ?	No, you're not.
Do you speak French (or whatever the pupil's language may be) ?	Yes, I do
Are you speaking French ?	No, I'm not.
Do you take lessons ?	Yes, I do.
Are you taking a lesson ? etc., etc.	Yes, I am.

Example 2.

To teach the difference between *I took* and *I was taking*, etc.

What language were you speaking when I came in ?	We were speaking French.
What language did you speak when I came in ?	We spoke English.
Were you saying "good morning" when I came in ?	No, I wasn't.
Did you say "good morning" when I came in ?	Yes, I did.

(The Teacher takes a pupil on one side, and gives him certain instructions. The Teacher then goes out of the room. He comes back a moment later. While he is out of the room, the pupil, acting on his instructions, stands up and appears to be reading a book; on the entrance of the Teacher he closes the book, puts it on the desk and sits down.)

Was X. sitting down when I came in ?	No, he wasn't.
Did X. sit down when I came in ?	Yes, he did.
Was X. reading when I came in ?	Yes, he was.
Did X. read when I came in ?	No, he didn't.
Was X. putting his book down when I came in ?	No, he wasn't
Did X. put his book down when I came in ?	Yes, he did.
Was X. standing up when I came in ?	Yes, he was.
Did X. stand up when I came in ?	No, he didn't
What was X. doing when I came in ?	He was standing up, and reading
What did X. do when I came in ?	He closed his book, put it on the desk and sat down.

(The Teacher gives certain instructions to one of his pupils, then sits at the table and writes. The pupil asks a certain question (according to his instructions). The Teacher stands up and answers.)

Was I sitting down when X. asked that question ?	Yes, you were.
Was I standing up when X. asked that question ?	No, you weren't
Was I writing when X. asked that question ?	Yes, you were.
Did I stand up when X. asked that question ?	Yes, you did.
Did I answer when X. asked that question ?	Yes, you did.
What was I doing when X. asked that question ?	You were sitting down and writing.
What did I do when X. asked that question ?	You stood up and answered it.
etc., etc.	

Example 3.

To teach the difference between *I took* and *I have taken*, etc.

(The Teacher takes a book.)

What have I (just) done ?	You've taken a book
What did I do a few moments ago ?	You took a book.

(The Teacher puts the book down.)

Did I take a book ?	Yes, you did.
Have I taken a book ?	No, you haven't.

(The Teacher opens the door.)

What have I done ?	You've opened the door
What did I do a moment ago ?	You opened the door.
Did I open the door ?	Yes, you did.
Have I opened the door ?	Yes, you have.

(The Teacher shuts the door.)

Did I open the door just now ?	Yes, you did.
Did I shut it afterwards ?	Yes, you did.
Have I shut the door ?	Yes, you have.
Have I opened the door ?	No, you haven't

(The Teacher drops his pencil and then picks it up.)

Did I drop my pencil ?	Yes, you did.
Have I dropped my pencil ?	No, you haven't
Have I picked it up ?	Yes, you have.

(The Teacher writes something on the blackboard and then rubs it out.)

Have I written something on the blackboard ?	No, you haven't. ¹
Did I write something on the blackboard ?	Yes, you did.
What did I write on the blackboard ?	You wrote
What have I written ? etc.	You haven't written anything.

Example 4.

To teach the meaning of the Present Perfect Progressive, and when to use "since."

"You came here at ten o'clock, didn't you ? And it's now half-past ten."

When did you come ?	I came at ten o'clock.
How long have you been here ?	I've been here for half-an-hour.
Since when have you been here ?	I've been here since ten o'clock.
Have you been here since ten ?	Yes, I have.
Have you been here (for) half-an-hour ?	Yes, I have.
Have you been here (for) an hour ?	No, I haven't.
How long have you been sitting there ?	I've been sitting here for half-an-hour.
Since ten ?	Yes, since ten.
Since nine ?	No, not since nine, since ten.
How long have you been listening to me ?	I've been listening to you (for) half-an-hour.
How long have you been taking lessons from me ?	I've been taking lessons from you for three months.
Have you been taking lessons from me since December ?	No, not since December.
Since when ?	Since March.
How long have you been learning English ?	I've been learning English (for) two years.
Since when ?	Since 19—
How long have you been living in this town ?	I've been living in this town for a year.

¹ An affirmative answer here might conceivably be correct, especially when intoned in a special way, but for practical purposes fine distinctions should be ignored.

How long have I been giving you lessons ?	You've been giving me lessons for two months
How long have you been living at your present address ?	I've been living there for a year.
Are you French ?	Yes, I am.
How long have you been French ?	I've always been French.
Since when ?	Since I was born.
Stand up, please. How long have you been standing up ?	I've been standing up for about ten seconds.
Since when have you been standing up ? etc., etc.	I've been standing up since you told me to.

Example 5.

To teach the difference between the German verbs *sein* and *werden* when used with a past participle.

(While gradually shutting the door.)

Wird die Tür zugemacht ?	Ja, sie wird zugemacht.
Ist die Tür zugemacht ?	Nein, sie ist nicht zugemacht.

(Now the door is shut.)

Ist die Tür zugemacht ?	Ja, sie ist zugemacht.
Wird sie zugemacht ?	Nein, sie wird nicht zugemacht sondern sie ist zugemacht.

(The Teacher ostensibly starts writing a letter.)

Wird ein Brief geschrieben ?	Ja, er wird geschrieben.
Ist der Brief (schon) geschrieben ?	Nein, er ist (noch) nicht geschrieben.

(The Teacher shows the written letter.)

Wird mein Brief geschrieben ?	Nein, er wird nicht geschrieben, er ist schon geschrieben.
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Example 6.

To teach the form and use of the French Accusative and Dative.

Qu'est ce que je vous donne ?	Vous me donnez un livre.
Est-ce que je vous l'ai donné ou est-ce que je vous l'ai pris ?	Vous me l'avez donné.
Est-ce que je l'ai donné à votre voisin ?	Non, vous ne le lui avez pas donné.
Est-ce que je l'ai donné à Mlle. X. ?	Non, vous ne le lui avez pas donné.
Est-ce à vous que je l'ai donné ?	Oui, c'est à moi que vous l'avez donné

Donnez-le maintenant à M. X.

Est-ce que vous le lui avez donné ?

L'avez vous donné à Mlle. X. ?

A qui l'avez vous donné ?

Qu'est-ce que vous lui avez donné ?

Est-ce à moi que vous l'avez donné ?

Dites à M. X. qu'il me le donne

Qu'est-ce qu'il a fait ?

Est-ce qu'il m'a donné le crayon ?

Qui est-ce qui me l'a donné ?

Est-ce à moi qu'il l'a donné ?

Oui, je le lui ai donné.

Non, je ne le lui ai pas donné.

Je l'ai donné à M. X.

Je lui ai donné un livre.

Non, je ne vous l'ai pas donné.

Donnez le livre au professeur.

Il vous a donné le livre.

Non, il ne vous l'a pas donné.

C'est M. X.

Oui, c'est à vous qu'il l'a donné.

Example 7.

To teach the use of the French relative pronouns *qui* and *que*.

Voici deux livres ; celui-ci est arrivé ce matin par la poste ; celui-là est arrivé hier par la poste. Le premier, je le garde ; l'autre, je vous le donne.

Quel livre est-ce que je garde ?

Vous gardez celui qui est arrivé ce matin.

Quel livre est-ce que je vous ai donné ?

Vous m'avez donné celui qui est arrivé hier.

Où est celui qui est arrivé ce matin ?

Il est là.

Où est celui qui est arrivé hier ?

Il est ici.

Quel livre est ici ?

Celui qui est arrivé ce matin.

Quel livre avez vous ?

J'ai celui qui est arrivé hier.

Lequel des deux livres est arrivé hier ?

Celui que vous m'avez donné.

Et lequel des deux est arrivé ce matin ?

Celui que vous gardez.

Etes-vous celui à qui j'ai donné un livre ?

Oui, je suis celui à qui vous avez donné un livre.

Qui est celui qui vous a donné le livre ?

C'est vous.

Qui est celui de qui vous avez reçu le livre ?

C'est vous.

Qui est celui qui a reçu le livre ?

C'est moi.

Quel livre est celui qui est arrivé ce matin ?

C'est celui qui vous gardez.

Et quel est celui qui est arrivé hier ?

C'est celui que vous m'avez donné

This brings our analysis and examination of all the forms of work coming under the heading "Conventional Conversation" to an end. We have yet to say a few words concerning

FORM OF WORK 50.

Normal Conversation

This, as the name implies, is ordinary conversation, without conventions and without any specific purpose except that of giving the student opportunities of using the language in which he is assumed to have attained proficiency. Normal conversation is what is carried on by any two or more persons when exchanging views or discussing subjects of everyday life.

Needless to say this form of work can only be used with profit with advanced students. As a means of correcting bad linguistic habits, it is worse than useless, for it would merely fix or deepen the vicious tendencies of the student. It is by continually making mistakes that we form the habit of making mistakes, and if we encourage the students to use normal conversation before he has been drilled into good habits, we cause him to become a fluent speaker of "pidgin."

Let us now assume that we are giving an advanced student opportunities of expressing himself and of conversing in the manner of native speakers.

The chief functions of the teacher at that stage are :

- (a) To cause or encourage the student to talk.
 - (b) To give the student opportunities to listen to the spoken language.
 - (c) To supply the student, when necessary, with the appropriate word or expression.
 - (d) To correct occasional mistakes.
- (a) Some students require no inducement or encouragement to talk ; given the slightest opportunity

they will hold forth by the hour in a continuous stream of loquacity, never at a loss for a subject of conversation. Others, on the contrary, can hardly be induced to speak at all, those who are reticent and uncommunicative even in their native language are not likely to say much when a foreign language is the medium of intercourse. In such cases it is for the teacher to arouse his pupil into speech ; he must draw him out and encourage him to give expression to his thoughts ; he must suggest topics of conversation and strive to prevent the talk from flagging. The best way to do this is to ask for information concerning the pupil's country, his occupation, tastes and hobbies. In the course of this questioning the teacher will probably discover the subject which is nearest his pupil's heart, and for most of us, there is generally at least one subject upon which we cannot remain silent. Many will instantly respond to enquiries concerning the political situation, others will readily talk when encouraged to speak of their pet hobby or pet aversion, others again will be roused into speech by remarks which cause them to defend their theories, their country's institutions or their national habits and customs.

(b) A conversation is not a monologue, it is two-sided, we not only express our thoughts but we listen to the expression of other people's thoughts. The student must not only increase his proficiency in speaking, he should also have opportunities for listening, and by listening he will increase his vocabulary, and learn new methods of expression. The teacher serves as model, and as the vehicle of new speech-material, but he, too, should remember that a conversation is not a monologue, and check any tendency he may have towards over-loquacity ; however interested he may be in the subject of conversation or however anxious he may be to air his views, he must resist the temptation to monopolise the conversation

(c) The teacher should endeavour to follow the thoughts of his pupil in order that he may be ready to

supply the right word or expression should the pupil hesitate or break down for want of the right material with which to clothe his thoughts, but he should not intervene needlessly nor too often. The student must be given a fair chance of expressing himself without undue prompting, otherwise he will be subject to a nervous anxiety to complete his sentence unaided; he will become flurried and his performance will suffer. The wait-a-minute-don't-tell-me attitude is not conducive to easy speech. A quiet and leisurely suggestion from time to time is generally sufficient and the best form of help.

(d) Generally speaking, the student should not be corrected in the middle of a sentence; in some cases it is inadvisable to correct him until he has completed the expression of his thoughts; the correction of some types of mistakes may even be deferred till the subject has been closed. If the teacher cannot trust his memory to correct a series of errors committed by his pupil in the course of a ten minutes' monologue, he may unostentatiously jot down a few reminders while the pupil is speaking, and use them to refresh his memory during the subsequent correction. If the student *must* be corrected while he is speaking, the best plan is for the teacher to echo his pupil's sentence with the necessary modification, without otherwise interrupting the flow of talk.¹

Example.

Student. And so, while I was waiting his answer——

Teacher. Yes, while you were waiting for his answer——

¹ I am indebted to Miss F. Lewis who, in helping me to revise the proofs of this book, called my attention to the following passage from Marcus Aurelius:

"From Alexander the grammarian, to be uncensorious; not to be carping and severe upon lapses of grammar or idiom or phrase, but dexterously to supply the proper expression, by way of rejoinder or corroboration, or discussion of the matter rather than the language, or some other graceful reminder or hint."—*Marcus Aurelius Antoninus to Himself. Book I.; No. 10. Rendall's English Translation.*

Student. While I was waiting for his answer, I decided to go and see the other man; the man which had written me the day before——

Teacher. I see, the man *who* had written to you the day before——

Student. The man who had written to me the day before. In his letter he had accepted to carry on the arrangement in the way I had suggested——

Teacher. Oh! He'd agreed to carry *out* the arrangement, had he?

Student. Yes! He'd agreed to carry it out, but etc., etc.

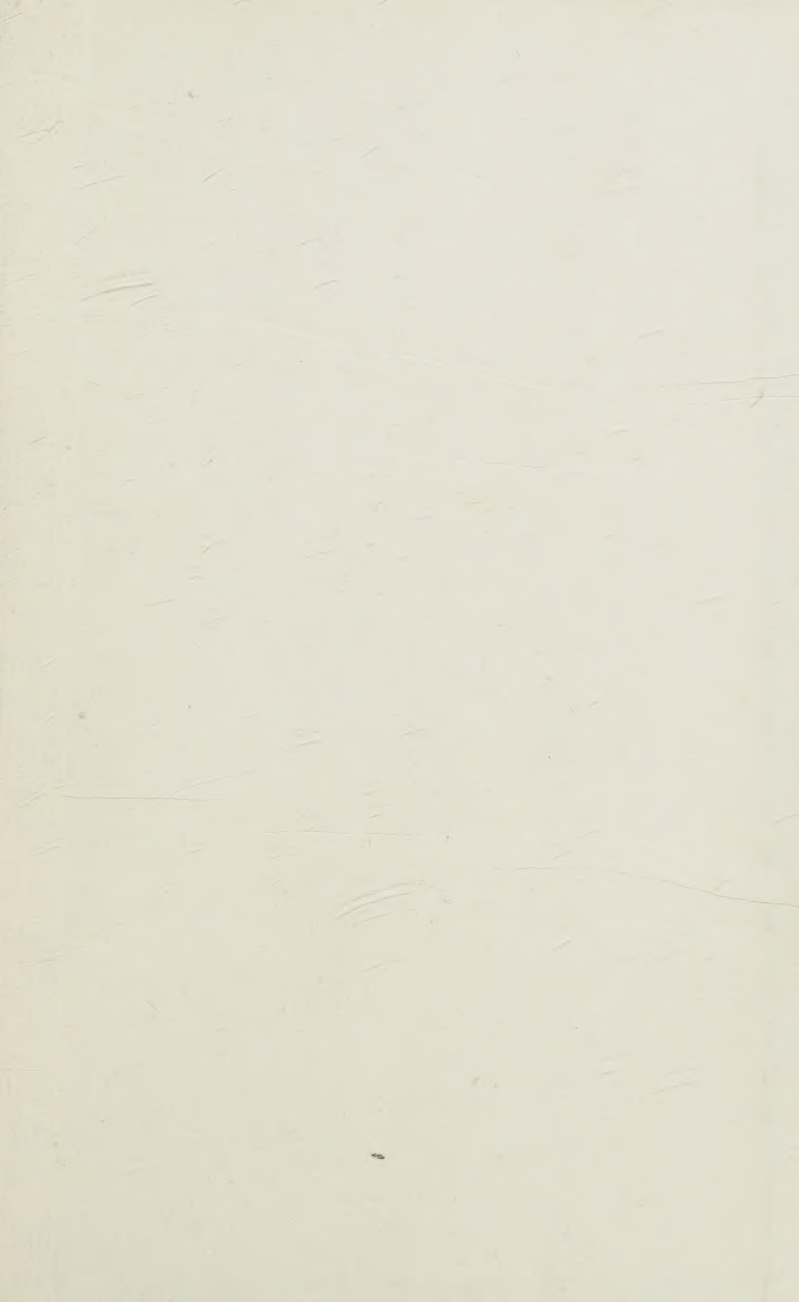
Example of the wrong way to correct.

Student. And so, while I was waiting his answer——

Teacher. *Waiting for!* To wait *for!* Some English verbs must be followed by *for*: to wait *for*: to ask *for*: to pay *for*: to wish *for*: to long *for*: to look *for*: Here, write down the list and repeat them. (*The student does so and continues—*)

Student. And so, while I was waiting *for* his answer, I—I—I—forget what I was saying now.

While listening to his pupil's speech, the teacher should divide his attention between the subject matter and the linguistic material actually used to express the subject matter. If he becomes too interested in what his pupil is saying, he may fail to pay sufficient attention to the way in which it is said. If, on the other hand, he is too absorbed in the pupil's pronunciation, choice of words, etc., and interrupts too frequently with comments and criticism, the pupil will lose the thread of what he is saying, and may ultimately be reduced to speechlessness, which is certainly not the object of an oral course.





KT-183-180

